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Vitamin C and Lysine powder help prevent heart attacks



by W. Gifford-Jones M.D.

Why is heart attack the number one killer in this country? Ninety-nine percent of doctors say it's due to atherosclerosis (hardening of arteries) and that cholesterol lowering drugs are the primary way to treat it. But closed minds are ignoring facts that could save thousands of North Americans from coronary attack.

Dr. Linus Pauling, two-time Noble Prize winner, was ignored for reporting that large amounts of vitamin C and lysine are needed to prevent coronary attacks. Twenty-five years ago Pauling reported that animals make vitamin C and humans do not. That's why sailors died of scurvy during long sea voyages, but the ship's cat survived.

Vitamin C is required to manufacture healthy collagen, the glue that holds coronary cells together, just like mortar is needed for bricks. Lysine, like steel rods in cement, makes collagen stronger. Pauling claimed it takes a mere 10 milligrams to prevent scurvy, but several thousand to prevent heart attack.

Williams Stehbens, Professor of Anatomy at Wellington University in New Zealand, proved Pauling was right. His research showed that coronary arteries closest to the heart are under the greatest pressure causing collagen to fracture resulting in the formation of a blood clot and death.

Dr. Sydney Bush, an English researcher, has now proven that vitamin C can reverse atherosclerosis. Bush took retinal photographs, then started his patients on high doses of vitamin C and lysine. One year later additional pictures showed atherosclerosis had regressed in retinal arteries.

Dr. Sydney Bush, an English researcher, has now proven that vitamin C can reverse atherosclerosis. Bush took retinal photographs, then started his patients on high doses of vitamin C and lysine. One year later additional pictures showed atherosclerosis had regressed in retinal arteries.

Fourteen years ago following my own coronary attack, cardiologists claimed it was sheer madness for me to refuse cholesterol-lowering drugs (CLD's). Instead, I decided to take high doses of vitamin C plus lysine with breakfast and the evening meal. Now you can take the right combination of Vitamin C and Lysine in a powder form I developed called Medi-C Plus™. The dosage for Medi-C Plus is one flat scoop with breakfast and the evening meal, mixed in water or juice. Medi-C Plus, from Preferred Nutrition, is available at Health Food Stores.

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Pharmaphilia

Words enter our language to address threats to life and kin. Terms like genocide inspired 'ecocide'. Now the word pedophilia inspires 'pharmaphilia'. Pharmaphiles are adults who are greedily attracted to the marketing of pharmaceutical drugs to young children. Not a pretty sight, but neither are the lives destroyed by drug marketers who lobby regulatory bodies and doctors to allow an ever expanding license for drugging more children and adolescents with conditions that they likely would have grown out of. Teen suicide rates have skyrocketed with the ever increasing consumption of antidepressants. Younger and younger children are being prescribed medications, then parents are told they will need to be on them for life. In Scandinavian countries children with these same conditions are helped through talk therapy and very few if any are required to take drugs. Let's start the conversation there.

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Reimar Kroecher

Enbridge Pipelying hearings

The Gateway Joint Review panel has come to town and left again. I was one of the hundreds of official interveners allowed to deliver a 10-minute talk. It was the only "public" hearing I have ever attended that was not public! With heavy police presence everywhere, the public was not allowed into the speakers' room. The only way for the public to watch the hearings was via a TV screen, located 13 city blocks away at the Westin Bayshore.

At the Sheraton Wall Centre where the hearings took place, the speakers were put into a waiting room. We were told we were not allowed to ask the panel any questions and then three of us at a time were escorted into the speakers' room. We were seated at a table facing the three members of the panel. Seated at another table were two Enbridge representatives. Further back in the small room, someone manned the media equipment and a court reporter was also present.



Reimar Kroecher

To be able to address the panel, one had to register no later than October 2011. No reason was ever given for why only members of the public who signed up more than a year and a half in advance were allowed to make a presentation. I was the third speaker. I listened with keen interest to the articulate, well-researched presentations of the two speakers sitting next to me. As soon as the first one was finished, the chair of the panel would say, "Thank you for your presentation. Next speaker please." No questions, no pause, no reflection, no request for clarification, just a directive by the chairperson to the next speaker: "Please begin your presentation."

When my turn came up I said, "I am opposed to this pipeline for powerful economic and environmental reasons. This pipeline would be financed by foreign money and as these billions of foreign investment dollars would flow in, the exchange value of the Canadian dollar would rise. Then when the pipeline is completed, our export of oil would go up by many billions of dollars and the exchange rate would rise again. While a strong Canadian dollar may sound good, in this case, there would be some drastic consequences. It would trigger huge increases in cross-border shopping and additional declines in our ailing manufacturing, tourist and film industries. Not so long ago when our dollar was worth 75 cents US, cross-border shopping was a non-issue. Now, with the dollar at or above parity, cross-border shopping has become a hemorrhage. The Canadian Retail Council tells us that cross-border shopping is a $20 billion hole. In other words, Canadians spend $20 billion per year, but they're spending it in the US, not in Canada. In retailing, for every $200,000 in sales, there is approximately one job. So $20 billion in lost sales means 100,000 lost jobs. As the exchange value of the loonie rose steadily from 2002 to 2007, the Canadian manufacturing industry lost approximately 250,000 jobs. The tourist industry and the film industry, both big employers, are ailing."

Continuing my presentation I said, "The Gateway pipeline, the Kinder Morgan pipeline, the proposed natural gas pipelines and liquefaction plants and the Site C dam (which would not even be needed if these pro-

continued p.13...

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Briefing Notes on Prescription Drugs

Wonder drug headlines mislead

In my inaugural column in this magazine almost eight years ago I wrote a story called "The media life cycle of the wonder drug story." It's time for an update.

That article concerned the drug Herceptin (trastuzumab), which is prescribed to women who have been treated for breast cancer as a way to stave off future tumours. In terms of the 'media life cycle' of Herceptin, as well as quite a few other drugs over the last 20 years, I have found they often carve out a very distinctive, predictable arc. Even if you're not interested in Herceptin, other drugs (one you or someone in your family may be taking) will follow a similar formula as noted below:

Create the buzz: A big cancer conference swirling with prestigious oncologists (cancer doctors) announces big preliminary results. Their research suggests they've made a 'major advance' in the treatment of cancer. Investors and clinicians catch the buzz.

Headline: "Trastuzumab trials steal show at ASCO meeting." (American Society of Clinical Oncology, June 15, 2005)

Create a sense of panic: The breakthrough breast-cancer drug is not yet available in Canada and certainly not available to the thousands of women whose lives could likely be saved by it. Headline: "New cancer drug limited to few." (June 7, 2005)

Inflate the benefits: The clinical trial underway is halted because the drug appears so wonderfully effective. Reporters regurgitate the impressive statistics showing the drug's benefit. Headline: "Results of Herceptin studies called stunning. Researcher says drug plus chemotherapy might be a potential breast-cancer 'cure.'" (October 20, 2005)

Advocacy journalists swallow the bait: A series of compelling stories are published lauding the new wonder-cure and decrying the pesky, bureaucratic obstacles women face in getting it. The pressure mounts and eventually the provincial government decides to cover the $30,000 a year drug. Headline: "Ontario will fast-track breast cancer drug." (June 24, 2005)

Journalist wins award: One journalist writing for the country's top paper gets awarded the Michener Award, the top award for "public interest journalism" in Canada. Headline: "*Globe* wins Michener Award." (April 12, 2006) In the citation for this 2005 Michener Award for meritorious public service journalism, it reads: "One series about the breakthrough breast cancer drug Herceptin prompted provincial government to fast-track the drug approval process and expand use of the drug. It had been restricted to women who were dying of breast cancer."

All this activity causes Herceptin sales to soar, buoyed by the heart-wrenching narratives of individuals taking the drug that is helping them defeat their personal war on cancer. The media campaign has been so effective even women who don't have the disease in question start pestering their doctors for prescriptions. Then a tipping point happens.

The problem is the whole thing was based on a lie. We learn this when the bad news trickles in. After a summer of hype, the USFDA issues a warning. (Note the media now calls the drug by its generic name.) Headline: "FDA, Genentech issue warning for anti-cancer drug trastuzumab." (August 31, 2005) This starts a small wave of stories of adverse effects and federally mandated drug warnings appear. It seems to have a predilection to cause heart failure in some patients. The black box warning tells physicians to look out for "Fatal infusion reactions and pulmonary toxicity." (November 2006)

Now the narrative has shifted completely. Some women are experiencing heart toxicity because of the



drug. An overview of large studies of Herceptin shows the drug only 'works' in those women who carry the HER-2 gene. About 3.3% more of them are still alive after a year, but 2.6% more develop serious heart toxicity because of it. It's clear that, despite the hype and the hope, generated by award winning 'public interest' journalism, the much-hyped $30,000 a year treatment is a boondoggle. What we don't know is how many women are dying because of the drug, overall.

Fast forward seven years later to this headline: "Drug giant probed for not disclosing 15,000 patient death reports: Roche under investigation by UK watchdogs after 80,000 'adverse reactions.'" *(Daily Mail*, July 8, 2012) The story refers to how Herceptin's adverse event data had been kept secret by the company. And so it goes.

New drugs get tested in high-quality, randomized, controlled trials, but prescribers and the public are left with an incomplete picture of the drug. We don't have full information on how many studies were done, how many patients were harmed or how they were harmed because unlike the award winning headlines, all this information is kept secret.

Incidentally, the best Canadian journalistic report on Herceptin was also found in the *Globe and Mail*. Andre Picard's article "Be skeptical about the Herceptin hype" (August 4, 2005) was an example of true public interest journalism, reflecting the fact that both the risks and the benefits of any drug need a full examination and that breathless and unwarranted enthusiasm might sell papers, but ultimately screws patients. Picard didn't win a Michener that year.

One last headline: "What we know of breast cancer drugs may be spin & bias." (January 14, 2013) A new Canadian study of major cancer trials uncovers an egregious amount of spin and bias. An analysis of 164 major trials found a third were biased in how they reported the benefits of the treatment and two thirds spun the reporting of the toxic effects, downplaying or ignoring them. In other words, the shameful Herceptin story is not an outlier; it's how cancer studies have been generally done and reported.

In 2006, I wrote to the Michener awards committee warning them that one of their nominees had produced a series of articles so biased it was likely causing great harm in women and a huge waste of money in our public drug plans. They ignored me.

Two great travesties continue to happen in drug reporting: Original trial reports contain both spin and bias and reporters generally aren't asking the hard questions like how many people are being hurt by a new drug so consumers are left with an unnaturally rosy picture of it.

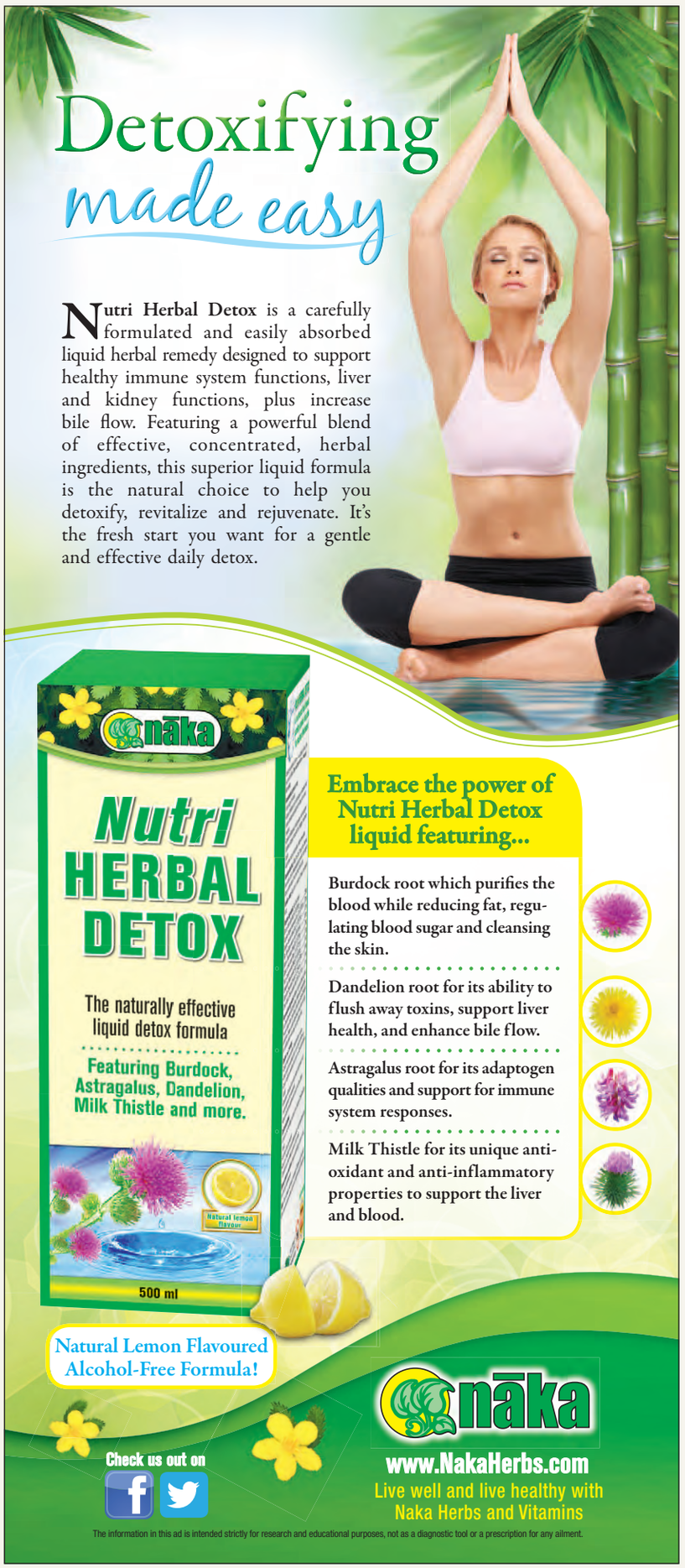
The most noteworthy villains in this saga might include the academic researchers who produced slanted reports of the drugs they studied, the advocacy journalists who allow themselves to be employed as part of the drug company's PR strategy, the journalism awards committees who reward the production of propaganda and the provincial governments whose drug programs succumb to the heart-rendering, biased journalistic reports.

Now it's my turn to be an activist journalist and I ask you to:

1. Sign a petition: An international petition campaign is underway www.alltrials.net calling on "governments, regulators and research bodies to implement measures to achieve the complete reporting of clinical trials." This is at least 40 years overdue so don't delay; sign now.

2. Consider volunteering for a study: If you have a health condition that might be helped by a new treatment, why not volunteer? Medical research would grind to a halt without volunteers. But before you sign the consent form, ask the researchers to show you, in writing, that the trial protocol is registered and publicly available, that a systematic review of current evidence has been done and the trial is actually needed and when it's over, the entire world can see the full, uncensored results. If they can't do that, don't sign. You don't want to be an accomplice to their crimes.

Alan Cassels is the author of **Seeking Sickness**. His next book, due out this year, is about the social history of the Cochrane Collaboration. He has never won a Michener award, but he once wrote a letter to the Michener committee complaining about someone who did win. They never wrote him back.



Medicating children and adolescents

How bad science sells bad drugs to kids

If we want to understand how our society may end up deluded about the merits of psychiatric medications, we can look at the research published by Robert Gibbons, Director of the Center for Health Statistics at the University of Chicago, on antidepressants and their use in children and adolescents. His latest articles appear in the June issue of the *Archives of General Psychiatry* and if we examine his research and look at how critiques of his research have been treated, we can see how bad science ends up creating a false "evidence base" for the use of the medications.

Let's follow this story from its start.

In 2004, the FDA concluded that, in randomized trials, SSRI antidepressants doubled the risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviours in children and young adults, compared to placebo. That finding led the FDA to issue a "black-box warning" that these drugs could increase the risk of suicide in children and adolescents.

Gibbons was a member of the FDA panel that voted in favour of the black box warning, 15 to eight. However, he was one of the dissenting eight and as he recalled in an interview, he felt that the warning was not warranted. Ever since then he has published a number of articles that dispute the FDA's finding that SSRIs increase the risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviours. As his most recent articles disclose, he has also served as an expert witness for Wyeth and Pfizer Pharmaceuticals in cases related to antidepressants and suicide. His findings, it is fair to say, help make him a valuable witness for the makers of SSRIs.

One of his first such papers, which attracted a great deal of media attention, was published in the American Journal of Psychiatry in 2007. He reported that, in the wake of the black box warning (and a similar warning by European regulatory authorities), the prescribing of SSRIs to children and adolescents decreased in the US and Europe and that when this happened there was a dramatic increase in suicides in the two countries he studied, the US and the Netherlands. The black box warnings, he concluded, apparently led to an increase in pediatric suicides.

Critics quickly pointed out the dishonest science that Gibbons had employed to make this case. He reported that SSRI prescriptions to youth declined by 22% in the US from 2003 to 2005 and that suicide rates in youth rose 14% between 2003 and 2004. But since he had only the suicide rates for the US through 2004, he should have focused on prescribing rates during that same period of time.

In fact, there had only been a very small decrease in the prescribing of SSRIs to youth between 2003 and 2004, when the number of suicides rose. It was between 2004 and 2005 that there was a significant decrease in the prescribing of SSRIs to youth, and, as the critics noted, once the suicide data for that period became available, it showed that during that time, the number of suicides for persons ages five to 24 declined.

In other words, the data showed that, as the number of prescriptions to children and youth declined, the number of suicides in this age group declined too. But Gibbons reported that the opposite was true. He did so by matching the increase in suicides in 2003-2004 to the decline in prescribing in 2004-2005. This is not the sort of error a scientist "accidentally makes." This is the sort of presentation of data one makes when he or she is trying to deliberately tell a story that fits a preconceived end.

In the Netherlands, Dutch academics were incensed with Gibbons and his statistical antics. In the Dutch Drug Bulletin, they noted that the increase in suicides in the Netherlands was so small that it was "not statistically significant." They described his conclusions as "astonishing" and "misleading," and stated that Gibbons and his co-authors had been "reckless" to publish such claims.

> In 2004, the FDA concluded that in randomized trials, SSRI antidepressants doubled the risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviours in children and young adults.

All told, Gibbons published at least eight papers between 2005 and 2011 challenging the FDA's black box warning (and it would be possible to critique those papers as well.) Then, in February and March of this year [2012], the *Archives of General Psychiatry* published in its online edition two more of Gibbons' articles on this topic. These two articles have now appeared in the journal's June print edition.

His reports, starting with their online publication, attracted considerable media attention. In an interview with the *LA Times*, Gibbons again sounded the theme that the black box warning issued in 2004 was a mistake...

More recently, with the publication of the two articles in the June print edition of the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, Medscape reported that his findings indicated there might be a "need to revaluate" the black box warning.

Back in February, when Gibbons' "Suicidal Thoughts" article first appeared online, David Healy wrote a blog detailing, as he said, the many "tricks" that Gibbons had employed to make the case that fluoxetine and velafaxine didn't increase suicidal thoughts in youth. In a similar vein, Mickey Nardo, a retired psychoanalyst who writes the blog 1boringoldman, wrote a series of posts on the two articles, describing the "inappropriate data selection," "opaque methodology," "obvious arithmetic errors" and "deceitful presentation" to be found in the two studies. Such flaws, he noted, rendered the studies incapable of "supporting any broad conclusions about the safety or efficacy of antidepressants in youth."

Intent on making his criticisms part of the scientific discussion, Nardo sent a "letter to the editor" of the *Archives of General Psychiatry* with these criticisms. He did so with the expectation that his letter would be published in the print journal. If so, his criticism would then become part of the scientific record that is archived by PubMed. The AGP editors... decided to publish his criticism as a "readers reply" and only online. As a result, they informed Nardo, "like other online posts, your reply will not be indexed in PubMed." As such, his criticism of Gibbons' report is not part of the "evidence base" on this topic.

More recently, Matthew Miller, an associate professor at the Harvard School of Public Health, whose research focuses on suicide, took a critical look at Gibbons' newly published suicide article. (Disclosure: Matthew Miller is a friend of mine.) He and his colleagues who collaborated on this review also concluded that Gibbons' finding – that fluoxetine and venlafaxine didn't increase the suicide risk in youth – was unwarranted. Instead, as they detailed in a letter to the editor of the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, Gibbons had committed methodological errors and misinterpreted data to draw "misleading conclusions." In fact, Miller and his colleagues concluded that the very data that Gibbons presented in his study, when properly analyzed, "align with the FDA findings," which is that the effect of antidepressants on suicidality in youth "appears harmful."

The AGP editors treated their "letter to the editor" in the same way they had treated Nardo's submission. They published it as a "reader's reply," but not as a letter to the editor.

In this brief review of Gibbons' work – and a review of how critiques of his work were handled by the *Archives of General Psychiatry* – we can see the triumph of bad science. In randomized trials, SSRIs were shown to double the risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviour in children and adolescents. This led the FDA to issue its black box warning. But since then Robert Gibbons has sought to tell a different story, both in the medical journals and in the media, and he has succeeded in doing so.

As such, this story can help us understand why we, as a society, may end up deluded about the merits of psychiatric medications. The evidence base is massaged in a way that protects the image of the drugs. Dishonest science gets published... And voila, you have a process for creating a societal delusion.



Adapted from **Robert Whitaker's** blog at www.madinamerica.com

FEB 26: Robert Whitaker (and other speakers) present "Medicating Children and Adolescents" 7:30PM, Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 949 West 49th Ave., Vancouver. Free.

A natural products regulatory cliff

Open letter to the natural health community, the Canadian public, CHFA board and members, retailers, manufacturers, by authors who request anonymity due to concerns they have about Health Canada or NHPD's vengeance.

If the natural health industry continues along the current path allowing Health Canada to apply the synthetic pharmaceutical type regulations to specialty Natural Health Products (NHPs), we will invariably end up with a Big Pharma-dominated marketplace similar to Europe and Australia where:

1. Under the influence of Big Pharma, government regulators have successfully outlawed common safe, efficacious and cost effective Natural Health Products using drug style regulations.
2. Traditional independent boutique health food stores are rapidly disappearing or already gone.
3. Multi-national pharmacies and mass market retailers are dominating a diminishing selection with their overpriced and sub-therapeutic, diluted, commodity-type supplements (500mg/90tabs of vitamin C retails for approximately $45 in Germany; prescription Omega 3 is currently 10 times more expensive via prescription, compared with the equivalent over-the-counter (OTC) product in your local health food store.

Health Canada allegedly promotes its new NHP regulations as necessary to ensure safety, efficacy and quality. Let's examine these three points:

1. **Safety:** A recent study shows the risk of mortality from taking vitamin food supplements is actually far less than the chance of being struck by lightning. Safety is clearly not a real issue, but rather a scare tactic used by Big Pharma-influenced regulators to justify drug style regulations. If Health Canada is sincere about protecting Canadians, it could start by addressing the 10,000 pharma deaths a year in Canada due to drug dosage errors and adverse reactions.
2. **Efficacy:** Canadians are not stupid. If a product does not work or there is no reasonable evidence supporting its effectiveness, people will choose not to buy it. If Canadians learn the health benefits associated with oranges and desire their vitamin C or fibre content, they currently have the freedom to make that choice. Similarly, if people want to consume Nattokinase or any other natural product with an impeccable safety record, they should not be denied the freedom to make that choice.
3. **Quality:** Quality (i.e.: ingredient identification, stability, heavy metal testing, microbiological testing) is already addressed via site licensing and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) regulations; this is a non-issue.

Specialty NHPs – false presumption of guilt: From a safety perspective, pre-existing or unlicensed specialty NHPs in Canada are currently in "Natural Product Number (NPN) jail" with a false pre-declaration of guilt awaiting an uncertain acquittal from the judges at Health Canada's Natural Health Products Directorate (NHPD) kangaroo court. Further, NHPs with NPNs are merely "on probation" awaiting threats of recall or permanent incarceration via random Information Request Notices (IRN) from the NHPD, as we recently experienced with Oregano Oil, Digestive Enzymes and Probiotics. Recognizing that NHPs have decades of safe and effective use begs the question: Why are we allowing government to predesignate NHPs as dangerous and forcing suppliers to invest millions to prove otherwise, whereas, tobacco and alcohol are known killers, but Health Canada has not banned these products. How long will it be before we need Health Canada's permission to eat grapefruit because more than 85 drugs, many of them highly prescribed for common medical conditions, are known to interact (sometimes fatally) with the pink fruit, according to research published in the medical journals?

More taxpayer dollars wasted: When it comes to protecting the public, the NHP regulations are wasting taxpayers' money. Further, rec- *continued p.21...*



Good Eats
La Dolce Vita

Alastair Gregor

Love is an art, and becomes better and more beautiful with every cherished encounter

February is one of the coldest months of the year in Canada, but it could get plenty hot inside on Valentine's Day, February 14. Build onto the day gradually, starting with the most important meal of the day – breakfast – when we Break-our-Fast of the night. Eating breakfast kick-starts your metabolism, which is at its highest in the morning, burning the most calories. The saying "Eat breakfast like a King, lunch like a prince and dinner like a pauper" contains great wisdom. Start the day off right with foods that are good for the heart, high in Omega-3s fatty acids, but low in saturated fats and sugar.

A healthy, balanced breakfast gives you stamina, keeps your weight down and helps you avoid developing heart disease and diabetes; 70% of adults who develop diabetes skip breakfast. A decent breakfast is crucial; it releases serotonin in the brain and improves your focus, memory, concentration and mood. It has a calming effect and reduces stress, which makes tasks easier.

Start the day off with two glasses of room temperature water to get you rehydrated, followed by some fresh, organic fruit. On Valentine's Day, you may wish to surprise your lover with chocolate covered strawberries and bananas, pomegranates, fresh figs and some honey for tender, intimate drizzling served up with a little champagne. Take quality time harmonizing with your lover, be playful and have fun...

After your shared bubble bath, enjoy your main breakfast together. Breakfast is the land of unbridled possibilities and the choices are endless. Enjoy banana pecan pancakes or French toast stuffed with brie or apricot jam, served with organic maple syrup, blueberries and true cinnamon, not the substituted cassia bark marketed as Saigon cinnamon. Cinnamon is a wonder food which regulates blood sugar and it ought to be consumed daily with local honey and organic yogurt.

If you are a cereal eater, Nature's Path offers some excellent premium, organic cereals, including their amazing Love Crunch Granola, which has a romantic story all its own for you to discover. Each purchase also helps the Bite4Bite food bank program. Remember the importance of donating all year so please support your local food bank.

You may wish to plan your Valentine's Day with a special trip up to Whistler Mountain, taking a romantic gondola ride to the top of the mountain for a day of skiing. Head to Christine's for mountaintop dining and enjoy the breathtaking view of the village and surrounding mountain peaks. Ski to the bottom and relax together with a long couples massage at one of the spas before heading to your chalet for a hot tub and an evening indoors preparing a beautiful dinner together.

Preparing a meal side-by-side can be a deeply intimate experience and sensual affair. To love and be loved is the greatest happiness of existence. There is a magical, alchemical phenomenon that occurs in preparing foods to feed one another. Foods prepared with love become utterly sensual; you discover a new way of communication, with you as the sender and your lover the recipient. Simple foods prepared this way take on the joy, gratitude and unity consciousness of two being together as one.

However you plan your day, make it special, make everyday special. The more intimacy is practised, the better it becomes. Love is an art and it becomes better and more beautiful with every cherished encounter.

To advertise your restaurant, food product or service in our Good Eats section, please contact food writer Chef **Alastair Gregor** at alastair@commonground.ca. Alastair's life-long passion for food was inherited from his grandmother.



Seralini and science: an open letter

Scientists critique the corruption of science by special interests



Gilles-Eric Seralini, photo by Charly Triballeau

Although impartiality is fundamental to science, scientific inquiry itself has always been vulnerable to manipulation by, or attack from, vested interests. The oil industry underminded climate change science, the tobacco industry denied the cancer connection, and so on – all the way back to Galileo, and beyond.

A recent example involves research on genetically modified corn, and its companion product Roundup, the most widely used herbicide in the world. Research completed last year by a French team led by Gilles-Eric Seralini, found a connection between Roundup and cancer. The findings were published in Food and Chemical Toxicology *last September. The findings made many genetic scientists uncomfortable, and calls were made to release the data behind Seralini's scientific "claims". Scientists in the genetic engineering industry didn't like what they read either, and pressured to have the study retracted. Fed up with political and corporate interference, a group of concerned scientists publshed the following letter in* Independent Science News *last October.*

A new paper by the French group of Gilles-Eric Seralini describes harmful effects on rats fed diets containing genetically modified maize (variety NK603), with and without the herbicide Roundup, as well as Roundup alone. This peer-reviewed study (Seralini *et* al., 2012) has been criticized by some scientists whose views have been widely reported in the popular press. Seralini *et al*. (2012) extends the work of other studies demonstrating toxicity and/or endocrine-based impacts of Roundup.

> The Seralini publication, and resultant media attention, raise the profile of fundamental challenges faced by science in a world increasingly dominated by corporate influence.

The Seralini publication, and resultant media attention, raise the profile of fundamental challenges faced by science in a world increasingly dominated by corporate influence. These challenges are important for all of science but are rarely discussed in scientific venues.

1. History of attacks on risk-finding studies

Seralini and colleagues are just the latest in a series of researchers whose findings have triggered orchestrated campaigns of harassment. Examples from just the last few years include Ignacio Chapela, a then untenured assistant professor at Berkeley, whose paper on GM contamination of maize in Mexico (Quist and Chapela, 2001) sparked an intensive internet-based campaign to discredit him. This campaign was reportedly masterminded by the Bivings Group, a public relations firm specializing in viral marketing – and frequently hired by Monsanto (Delborne, 2008).

> It is a major problem for science and society when current regulatory protocols approve GMO crops based on little to no useful data upon which to assess safety.

The distinguished career of biochemist Arpad Pusztai came to an effective end when he attempted to report his contradictory findings on GM potatoes (Ewen and Pusztai, 1999a). Everything from a gag order, forced retirement, seizure of data and harassment by the British Royal Society were used to forestall his continued research (Ewen and Pusztai, 1999b; Laidlaw, 2003). Even threats of physical violence have been used, most recently against Andres Carrasco, professor of Molecular Embryology at the University of Buenos Aires, whose research (Paganelli et al. 2010) identified health risks from glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup (Amnesty International, 2010).

It was no surprise therefore, that when in 2009, 26 corn entomologists took the unprecedented step of writing directly to the US EPA [(Environmental Protection Agency] to complain about industry control of access to GM crops for research, the letter was sent anonymously (Pollack, 2009).

2) The role of the science media

An important, but often unnoticed, aspect of this intimidation is that it frequently occurs in concert with the science media (Ermakova, 2007; Heinemann and Traavik, 2007; Latham and Wilson, 2007). Reporting of the Seralini paper in arguably the most prestigious segments of the science media: *Science*, the *New York Times*, *New Scientist* and the *Washington Post* uniformly failed to "balance" criticism of the research, with even minimal coverage of support for the Seralini paper (Carmen, 2012; Enserink, 2012; MacKenzie, 2012; Pollack, 2012). Nevertheless, less well-resourced media outlets, such as the *UK Daily Mail* appeared to have no trouble finding a positive scientific opinion on the same study (Poulter, 2012).

3) Misleading media reporting

A key pattern with risk-finding studies is that the criticisms voiced in the media are often red herrings, misleading or untruthful. Thus, the use of common methodologies was portrayed as indicative of shoddy science when used by Seralini et al. (2012), but not when used by industry (see refs above and Science Media Centre, 2012). The use of red herring arguments appears intended to sow doubt and confusion among non-experts. For example, Tom Sanders of Kings College, London, was quoted as saying: "This strain of rat is very prone to mammary tumors particularly when food intake is not restricted" (Hirschler and Kelland, 2012). He failed to point out, or was unaware, that most industry feeding studies have used Sprague-Dawley rats (e.g. Hammond et al., 1996, 2004, 2006; MacKenzie et al., 2007). In these and other industry studies (e.g. Malley et al. 2007), feed intake was unrestricted. Sanders' comments are important because they were widely quoted and because they were part of an orchestrated response to the Seralini study by the Science Media Centre of the British Royal Institution. The Science Media Centre has a long history of quelling GMO controversies and its funders include numerous companies that produce GMOs and pesticides.

> A key pattern with risk-finding studies is that the criticisms voiced in the media are often red herrings, misleading or untruthful.

4) Regulator culpability

In our view, a large part of the ultimate fault for this controversy lies with regulators. Regulators, such as EFSA (the European Food Safety Authority) in Europe and the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) and FDA (Food and Drug Administration) in the US, have enshrined protocols with little or no potential to detect adverse consequences of GMOs (Schubert, 2002; Freese and Schubert, 2004; Pelletier, 2005).

GMOs are required to undergo few experiments, few endpoints are examined and tests are solely conducted by the applicant or their agents. Moreover, current regulatory protocols are simplistic and assumptions-based (RSC, 2001), which, by design, will miss most gene expression *continued p.34...*

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Saving heritage seeds

For North America's early colonists, the introduction of wheat, rye, oats, peas, cabbage and other vegetable crops was critical to their survival. In the 1850s, the US government recognized that feeding an expanding continent required a diversification of food seeds and seeds were sourced by way of horticultural seed catalogues, farmer (or gardener) exchanges and on-farm seed saving. The US Patent and Trade Office (PTO) – now called the USDA – oversaw seed distribution and by 1897 had distributed more than one billion packets of seeds.

In 1883, the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) formed and lobbied for the cessation of this program. In 1924, it convinced Congress to cut USDA seed distribution entirely. In the 1960s, companies that had no historical seed interests, primarily chemical and pharmaceutical firms, began purchasing smaller seed companies. Previously, no other natural resource had shifted from public to private hands with such speed and so little regulatory oversight.

As a result, the multinational companies dropped many of the open-pollinated seed varieties from their commercial lists and focused on genetic engineering and control through patenting seeds. We have now lost hundreds of varieties of food crops, which had been carefully handed down to us by our ancestors through many generations. But we can still source and save what little we have left by getting involved in seed saving at a local level.

We can still source and save what little we have left by getting involved in seed saving at a local level.

That's why when I select seeds for my garden I choose open-pollinated varieties from which I can save my own seeds. You can find sources for open-pollinated seeds on the Seeds of Diversity (SOD) website at www.seeds.ca The best place to find them is at your local Seedy Saturday show where gardeners and farmers meet to trade, share and swap seeds each spring. Check for the Seedy Saturday closest to you; there are over 100 across Canada. (See www.seeds.ca)

Since 1984, Seeds of Diversity has acted as a living gene bank, dedicated to the conservation of public domain, non-hybrid plants of Canadian significance. Today, 1,400 members propagate and distribute 2,500 varieties of vegetable, fruit, grain, flower and herb seeds. A SOD project called The Canadian Seed Library backs up members' seeds by storing samples in low-humidity freezers. The online Heritage Plants database currently has information about 19,000 varieties of cultivated plants that are of regional, cultural, economic and historical significance to Canadians. Unfortunately, over three quarters of the documented plant varieties in SOD's Heritage Plants database are endangered for future generations. We can help by participating in the Adopt a Vegetable initiative. At present, 18 percent of the seed collection is permanently adopted through donations from 273 people and companies.

Seeds of Diversity has collected over 60 varieties of garlic from 80 volunteers growing garlic across Canada. They want to double the program this year and you can help. Together, we can protect our plant heritage for the future and all it takes is 15 square feet of garden space and a commitment to grow two varieties of garlic for two years.

Carolyn Herriot is author of **The Zero Mile Diet: A Year-round Guide to Growing Organic Food** and a companion book, **The Zero-Mile Diet Cookbook: Seasonal Recipes for Delicious Homegrown Food** (Harbour). She grows Seeds of Victoria at The Garden Path Centre. Info and online catalogue at http://www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath/

...**Enbridge** *from pg. 5*

jects were to be cancelled) – would all be financed by an inflow of foreign investment. The Canadian dollar would definitely appreciate. All of these projects would lead to big increases in the export of hydro carbons so the Canadian dollar would appreciate again. Compared to the job losses in retailing and manufacturing, the jobs created by the Gateway Pipeline would be insignificant: 2,000 temporary jobs during year one of construction, 3,000 temporary jobs during year two and 2,000 temporary jobs during year three. After that no more construction jobs, only a few hundred permanent jobs to run and maintain the pipeline.

To bolster its claim that the pipeline is in the public interest, Enbridge, using flawed analysis, claims there will be thousands of induced or indirect jobs created. Their basic assumption is that all the skilled welders, the engineering firms, the surveyors etc., building the pipeline would be unemployed if the pipeline were not built. This assumption is absurd. Businesses in Northern BC are lamenting the shortages of skilled labour and pressuring government to allow the import of foreign labour. If the pipeline were not built, these resources would be employed elsewhere. These Enbridge claims really need to be peer reviewed and the peers should not be paid by the oil industry. Furthermore, Enbridge has not committed itself to using Canadian made pipe, nor has it informed Canadians that the price for gasoline, diesel and heating oil will rise if this pipeline is built. No longer would the North American price be below the prices in Asia or Europe.

Along its entire route through BC, this pipeline runs through earthquake country. From 1929 to 2013, there were five major quakes offshore and near the coast: one measuring seven on the Richter scale, three measuring around 7.5, and one measuring 8.1. The big subduction quake that historically has happened every 150 to 200 years is overdue. That one will measure around nine on the Richter scale. It will wipe out the loading facilities in Kitimat and rupture the pipeline in countless places. It will suck the water out of Douglas Sound and tankers in the sound will sit on the bottom and break apart and the water will return in a huge tidal wave. Tar sand oil spilled in the ocean or large rivers cannot be cleaned up. After a short time on the surface, it sinks to the bottom. Tides or river current will spread it around and conventional skimming methods are useless. Any talk about 'world class cleaning facilities' is an attempt to deceive the public!"

> I was one of the hundreds of official interveners allowed to deliver a 10-minute talk. It was the only "public" hearing I have ever attended that was not public!

Finally I said, "If your panel recommends that this pipeline is in the public interest, when a spill happens you, and only you, will be blamed. The politicians will hide behind your backs, arguing they are blameless because they trusted you. You will be remembered as the short-sighted fools who brought on the catastrophe. If you recommend against this pipeline and cabinet overrules you, when a spill happens you will be celebrated as having had great wisdom and foresight and all the blame will fall on the politicians (where it belongs)."

After my presentation, many uncomfortable thoughts went through my mind. Was this a real hearing or was it just a farce? Had the panel made up its mind a long time ago and was just going through the motions? Why was the public excluded while two Enbridge representatives were allowed to witness the whole thing? Why were there only two evening sessions and no weekend sessions? Why was there no webcast allowing the public to follow the proceedings on the internet? Why was it made impossible for people working between nine and five to listen to the presentations of our concerned fellow citizens? Was this a deliberate attempt to manage the message and to make sure the message reached as few ears as possible?

Reimar Kroecher is a retired economist who taught economics at Langara College for 33 years. He holds degrees in economics from UBC and UCLA. For further information, visit www.dogwoodinitiative.org, www.wcel.org, ecojustice.ca and www.davidsuzuki.org

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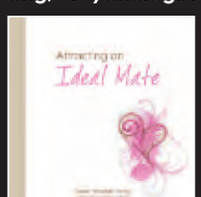
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Nutrispeak Vesanto Melina, MS, RD

The real paleo diet

While paleolithic diets are the subject of many websites and books, I have yet to meet or hear of anyone who follows anything even close to a real paleo diet. The paleo wannabes who buy grass-fed beef actually buy a product with five times the fat content of the wild game of eons ago. Today's pseudo paleos buy select cuts and avoid the offal (liver, kidney, brain, intestines, tongue, testicles), bone marrow and stomach contents our ancestors would have consumed. Further, the intake of insects by today's imitators is nowhere near that of true paleo people and our ancestors ate a *lot* of plant food. In fact, they gathered far more than they hunted. They never used sugar or oil and salt was so scarce that sodium intake was one sixth of ours today. Honey was rare and there were no lattes.

The paleolithic period lasted for two million years, ending 10,000 years ago when the agricultural cultivation of grains, legumes and other plant foods began. Prior to that, domestic animals were not kept and meat was nothing like the flesh from today's lean, grass-fed cows. After being weaned from the milk of their own species, paleo people did not touch a drop of cow or goat's milk. Nonetheless, their calcium intake was double that of current levels, originating from bones and plant foods.

U.S. News & World Report ranked today's paleo diet as the least healthy of all 25 dietary patterns rated.

Paleo people evidently ate plenty, with an intake of about 3,000 calories per day. This was necessary for climbing hills, gathering massive amounts of plant foods, chasing potential prey (with occasional success) and eluding predatory, carnivorous animals. Two thirds of their calories – 2,000 per day – came from plants. The true paleo diet was very high in fruit, leafy greens, roots, other vegetables, nuts and legumes such as peanuts and seeds, all of which was generally consumed raw. Anthropologists consider that the plant foods consumed by paleos provided as many calories as vegans consumed in 2012 and exceeded today's recommended intake for fibre, folate, potassium and many other protective nutrients.

When people switch to today's pseudo paleo diet, their big advantage is that they eliminate refined carbohydrates (white flour and sugar) and in some cases they cut out oils, though most don't because they fry meat, chicken and fish. But they do start to eat more whole plant foods, though not as much as their paleo ancestors.

U.S. News & World Report ranked today's paleo diet as the least healthy of all 25 dietary patterns rated, based on high cholesterol and fat content and intakes of healthful plant foods that fall short in protective nutrients and phytochemicals. Among other criticisms levelled at the pseudo paleo diet is that it ignores the environmental crisis that should be leading us to eat lower on the food chain and it shows little concern for the plight of grass-fed beef or "free range" chickens when they reach the slaughterhouse.

Since few people have access to much wild game, from a health perspective it makes sense to replace game with cooked legumes (beans, peas and lentils), fresh green peas and sprouted lentils or mung beans. The legumes are high in protein, low in fat and cholesterol free.

For more info, visit www.vegsource.com/news/2010/07/the-truth-about-the-weston-price-foundation.html

Vesanto Melina is a BC dietitian and co-author of Becoming Raw, Becoming Vegetarian, Becoming Vegan and the Raw Food Revolution Diet. www.nutrispeak.com

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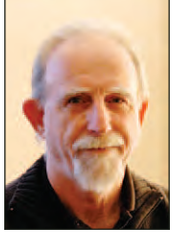
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Mac McLaughlin

StarWise

February 2013

FEBRUARY is supposed to be the coldest month of the winter season, but my bet is it's going to be hot. The Aquarius new Moon on February 9 carries the seedlings of what will spring forth from Pandora's box over the next lunation cycle. Saturn plays a strong part in what takes place throughout the month, as he is the traditional lord of Aquarius. He rises in the east at new Moon time, with a strong status, sort of like visiting dignitaries from other lands. The main objective with Saturn is within our efforts to bring order, harmony, fairness, justice, health and wholesomeness to the land and people. The spirit of Aquarius manifests through acts of humanitarian love. Imagine the day when we finally figure out we are one people on one planet and that each one of us is most precious and deserving of love and forgiveness. Sorry, got a little carried away for a moment.

Groups and gatherings, marches and protestations are in the works and oh boy; there will be some fireworks! Saturn is moving through Scorpio, which is a sign very connected to the environment and its health. Start counting the heads involved in any serious movement that has to do with the protection of the environment and my bet is that dear old Scorpio will come to the top of the list. At the time of the new Moon, Venus squares off with Saturn prompting us to do some soul searching in order to find what will bring contentment and peace of mind. Mercury, Mars and Jupiter make a strong connection and the combination is going to cause or allow

ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19
You're on the verge of some important discoveries that will come your way throughout the spring. In the meantime, you can expand your social contacts by joining with groups and societies that have similar interests. This is a good time to mix and mingle.

TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21
Work and relationships are the main focus throughout February. Heart-to-heart talks may help in clearing any resentments or grudges. Conditions change for the better towards the end of the month. The key ingredient is communication.

GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20
Travel plans materialize. Opportunities to write, publish and study emerge. Expect a demanding month. Pace yourself and watch you don't get embroiled in a conflict. The energy is intense and highly charged. Diplomacy, patience and kind words are needed to get you through successfully.

CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22
Your interests take a turn towards the deeper and more mysterious subjects like reincarnation and other eastern beliefs. Travel could be in the works. Academia, publishing and matters of the higher mind come into play. A transformative process is in the works.

LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22
There may be some tough hurdles to overcome regarding personal or joint monies. Land and real estate may figure in as well. This is your solar low of the year and a time in which you should take it easy.

VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22
You might need another body in order to handle all that is on your platter throughout February. The key is to set a pace and try to stay within it. Fights, accidents and misunderstandings could manifest. Kindness and patience will get you through safely.



people to vent, argue, contest and protest, with the dirt ending up on the front pages of our local papers. It's not as bad as it seems. Actually, we may be in the mood to move forward and digest the hard-earned and hard-learned lessons we have been dining on over the last several years.

The full Moon on February 25 brings life's activities to a peak. Jupiter forms a square with the full Moon while Mercury and Mars are conjunct. This is quite the planetary mix and we can expect some very stormy weather, inside and outside of the house. "Slow down" is the mantra I would choose in order to accommodate the intense energy on-board at this time. Mercury and Mars stay in close proximity to one another throughout February and early March. What it all means is that we're going to be on about the important issues of the day. Choose your favourite hobby horse, be it the environment, the government, the police, well, you name it – oh, and of course, the politicians and their machinations near and far. The battle to save the environment is on. Not that I want to drone on about the negative, but this full Moon and the last several days of February indicate some type of unstable weather phenomena, such as big winds and probable calamities on the high seas or in the mountains. According to the Vedic Chart, at the time of the new Moon on February 9, our collective mindset will be in a cautionary mode and our collective jaw may be set and determined to truly strive to adhere to the most stringent measures possible to safeguard the land and seas. There might be a move on in higher places to winnow the Neanderthals and get up to speed with taking care of business.



LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22
A busy time unfolds as you focus on organizing yourself. Health considerations are at the forefront. You may weigh up the pros and cons regarding family politics. It's time for some soul searching in order to find the balance.



SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21
Matters regarding the home and family come up. Saturn is having an important influence over Scorpio now. He asks you to live with less and let go of the things that are no longer useful. Economize, cut away and trim back where you can.



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21
Ducking controversy is out of the question. It's too late for that. Now is the time to make a stand for what you believe in. Oh, there will be fights and possible tears, but the air clears and you are able to move forward again.



CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19
Saturn, lord of Capricorn and Aquarius, features strongly throughout the days of February. Of course, you are naturally connected to this planet and what others whine about, you do without complaint. Continue your ascent up the mountain and remain open to change.



AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19
The Aquarius new Moon on February 9 signals a new start. In addition, Venus visits all month and her influence inspires us towards higher and refined living conditions. It's time to apply your super will power to the tasks at hand.



PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20
Mercury and Mars visit in February, making it a very busy, exciting and challenging time. Set a pace you can handle and refuse to rush. Arguments and incidents could arise. Otherwise, you can expect some excitement as a series of unique developments occur.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109





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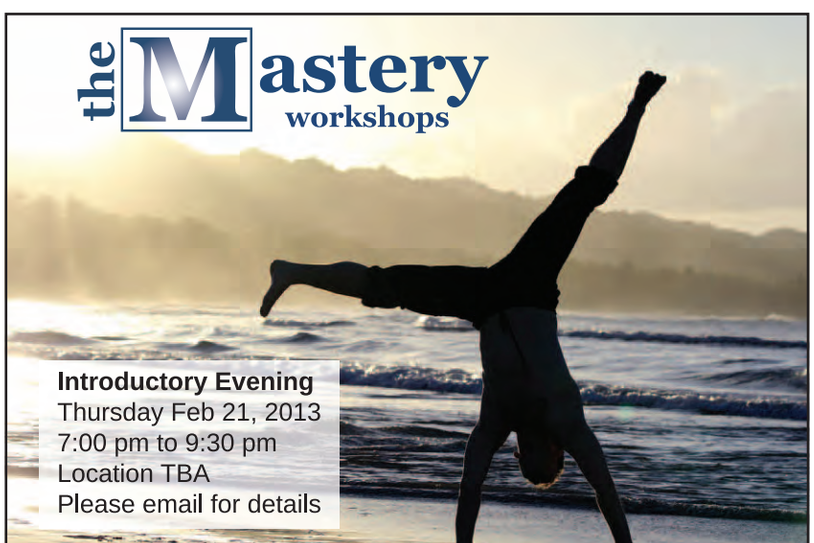
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Just now

an interview with Eckhart Tolle

To read Eckhart Tolle's latest column, please see the current print edition of Common Ground. For copyright reasons, we are authorized to publish this column in our print version only.

JR: In your new book, I feel like you're the modern equivalent of the explorers that came to the new world, but an explorer and documenter of consciousness, discovering a new world.

ET: Yes, discovering is the right word. It's not that you need to make a great effort to attain it or bring it about or acquire it. It's discovering it's already there in you – conscious awareness that's obscured, or partially obscured, in many people. It's a discovery of something already there.



Eckhart Tolle with *Common Ground* publisher Joseph Roberts.
Photo by Ishi Dinim.

It's like waking up after a dream, because identification with the thinking mind and its stories and the old emotional conditioning is like being immersed in a kind of dream world, which very often turns into a nightmare – acting out old conditioned patterns again and again. The whole structure of the egoic mind is an old dysfunction.

There's some evidence that the ego started about 6,000 years ago, but nobody can say for sure. Before that, humans were in a state of innocence. When we go beyond the dysfunction of the ego, we regain our original innocence, but on a much deeper level. This is why Jesus said unless we become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

So, returning to the original innocence, and at the same time going much deeper into that with full awareness – that's the process. We're coming out of thousands of years of dreadful suffering, almost the whole of recorded history of humanity. If you really look at it in an unbiased way, as if you'd never seen it before, one cannot but admit that, to a large extent, 80 to 90 percent of it is a history of pathological insanity, the suffering that humans have created for themselves and, of course, inflicting it upon others.

JR: And exporting it through colonization to the new world.

ET: Yes, so the important part of the awakening process is the realization of the insanity in human history, collectively, to this day playing itself out in world events. Also, to be aware of the insanity within oneself – old, dysfunctional patterns that come again and again that create suffering. So when you see that you're insane, then you're not completely insane. Sanity comes the moment you realize the fact of insanity. To see insanity is not a negative thing.

JR: At least you're out of denial.

ET: Yes, that's why in the film A Beautiful Mind, for example, which is about a mathematical genius who did have a mental dysfunction, his mind was developed in certain areas but he was also insane. The viewer of the film doesn't know that until a certain point when the character realizes that many of his experiences are delusions. At that moment, his healing begins. He's not cured yet, but his healing begins because he's recognized his own insanity. That recognition can only come out of sanity, which is the awareness of unconditioned consciousness.

JR: I remember you saying before you published your last book that the next one would be about why there isn't peace on this planet. Was finding a solution one of the major intentions of A New Earth?

ET: Yes, to see the nature of the major dysfunction. That's why I talk quite a bit about the ego in this book. We need to recognize the nature of the dysfunction. Sometimes, even very great Eastern teachers sometimes neglect that part because they're not really touched by the magnitude of, especially, the Western ego. So it's very important for us to see the dysfunction so that we can recognize it when it arises.

Part of the new book is about recognizing the ego, which I regard as a semi-autonomous energy. It's an energy field. Every thought you think is an energy field. It has a form and then it dissolves and then there is another form. The ego itself is an energy field and it has a collective and individual aspect. Every individual ego is part of the collective. They're connected. Every individual is a manifestation of the collective. To recognize that is essential because the ego, being a very clever entity, has many ways of reappearing. Even if you've seen it in one disguise, it can suddenly reappear in a new one.

You might suddenly realize your whole sense of self, identity, is being derived from your possessions and social position. You see that your whole sense of identity is bound up with that and you recognize one aspect of ego. Well, usually it only comes to people when they suffer, when the identification with something no longer works…

It's recognizing the ego in its many disguises. I've met Buddhist monks who had enormous egos without knowing it. I remember being in a monastery afraid to approach them because they seemed so aloof. Yet I've met other Buddhist monks who were like little children and it was a joy to talk to them because they'd laugh and not take themselves seriously at all. They didn't take the whole Buddhist thing seriously either, yet they practised it knowing it was only a form and they weren't identified with it.

There's a dimension in us that has nothing to do with content. Self-realization is that I am not that. I'm not my story, not my grievances and hang-ups, not the story of me that I'm telling other people at parties or repeating in my head again and again. That is only form. It's temporary.

When you see what you're not, it's already liberating. Something inside you breathes a sigh of relief. Then, of course, the mind begins to ask, "What are you if you are not that?" It wants an answer. In other words, it wants some new form. It wants a new thought. There must be a thought that I am. But it doesn't work like that. That's why the great book the Tao Te Ching starts with the line that the Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao because Tao – in the ancient Chinese way of putting it – is the formless dimension. You could say pure consciousness, but with any term we use we have to be careful it's not mistaken for "It." Otherwise, the mind comes in and says, "Oh, consciousness, yes. I believe that I'm consciousness." It's not another belief. It's finding that spaciousness inside yourself that's there when you let go of identification of form.

Excerpted from **Just now: a two-part interview with Eckhart Tolle** by Joseph Roberts. Read the full interview online. Go to www.commonground.ca Click on archives. Click on 2007 at the top of the page. For part one, click on September 2007. For part two, click on October 2007.

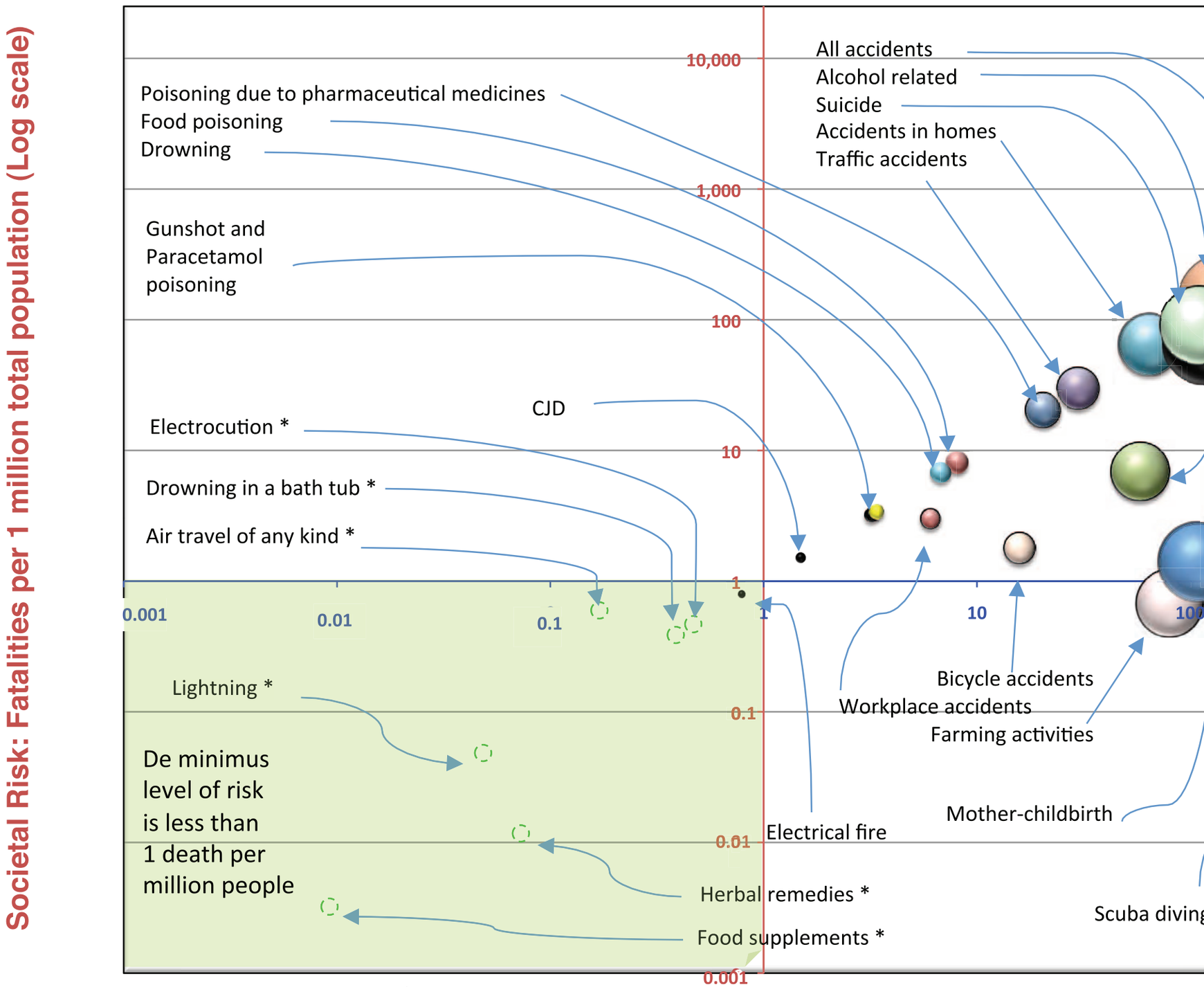






Societal vs Individual Risk of Death in the United Kingdom

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representing deaths due
Afghanistan are a similar
for a soldier deployed to
vastly more citizens are e



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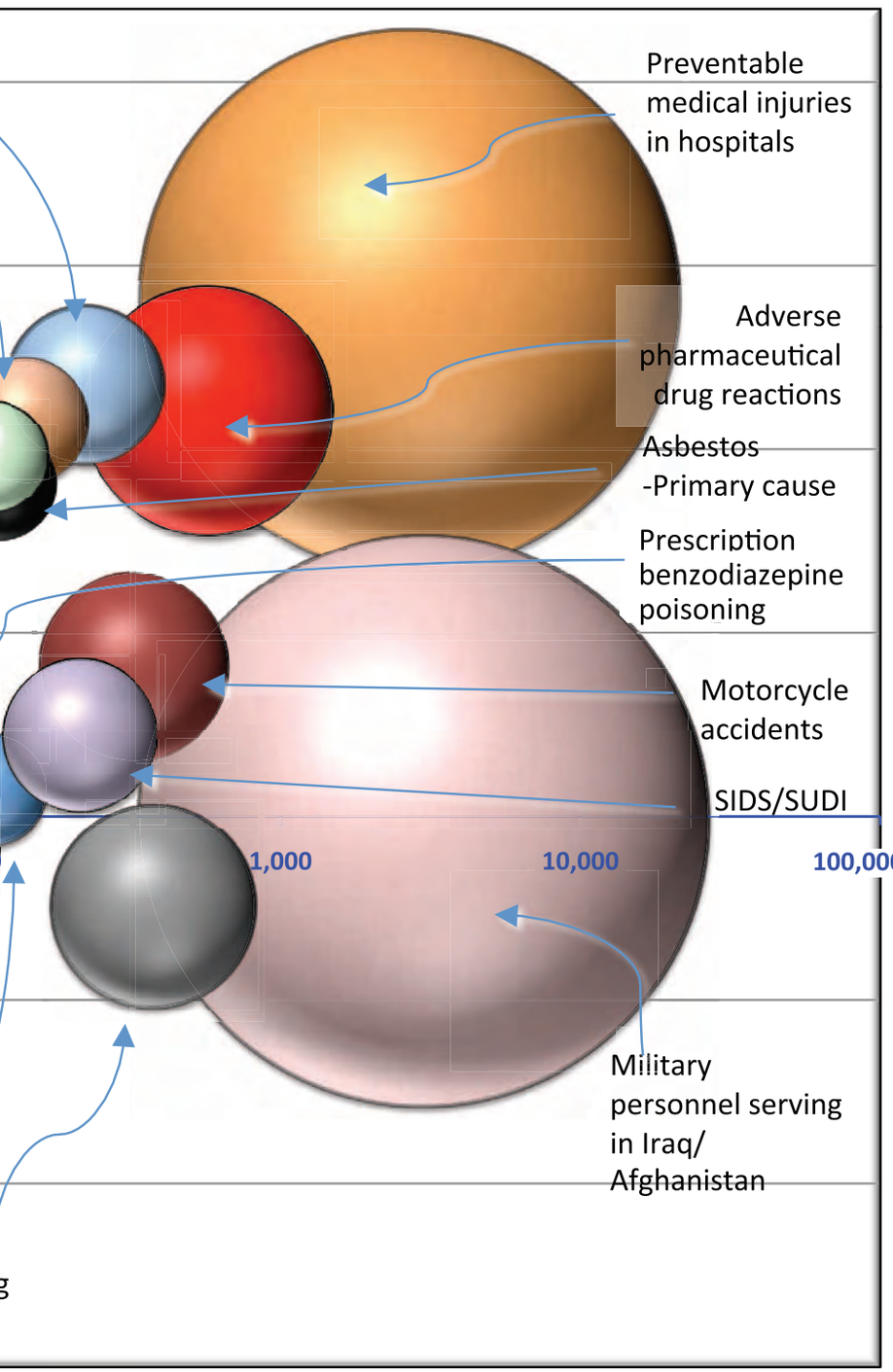
Sources: Variety of UK Government and NGO databases, reports, officials and expert advisers.

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Individual Risk: Fatalities per

ented as the risk of death per million total population.
esented as the risk of death per million exposed to that hazard.
ts the relative risk to an individual. By way of example, the bubbles
to preventable medical injuries in hospitals and military personnel in Iraq/
size because the risk of death to a patient in a UK hospital is similar to that
a war zone. Medical injury poses a greater risk to society simply because
exposed to that risk and hence die. **Note: Log scales.**



1 million people exposed to risk (Log scale)

...***Regulatory Cliff*** *from pg. 9*

ognizing NHPs offer a net benefit to Canada's overburdened public health care system, why is the government not marketing them in the same fashion they over-promote the flu, H1N1 or HPV vaccines?

Big Pharma control: As you may have recently become aware, huge multinational companies are systematically buying (AKA "mergers") natural health food suppliers. Acquisition and consolidation are the first step towards market control and commoditization. These market activities will ultimately have a trickle-down effect – whereby only huge corporations will be allowed to "play" in the NHP manufacturing and retail space. Here is a comparison of the Big Pharma prescription business model versus the traditional health food store:

	Big Pharma	**Health Food Store**
Product:	Omega 3 fish oil softgel	Omega 3 fish oil softgel
Dosage:	840mg (465 EPA + 375 DHA)	900mg (600 EPA, 300 DHA)
Form:	Ethel Ester	Ethel Ester
Brand	very few	too numerous to list
Your cost:	$2.33 / softgel	$0.19 / softgel

Comparison to the US "Generally Regarded as Safe" (GRAS) style regulations: In the US, citizens are free to consume the NHPs of their choice without predatory government interference. Health claims are addressed on each product's packaging with a boilerplate disclaimer: "This statement has not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease." Why can't we reduce our federal tax burden and cost of NHPs by adopting this regulatory model in Canada? Further, it is important to note Americans have greater access to NHP potency and variety. For example:

a. Vitamin D is limited to 1,000 IU per capsule in Canada; 5,000 IU per capsule is widely available in the USA.
b. Red Yeast Rice Extract with naturally occurring lovastatin is widely available in the USA. In Canada, Red Yeast Rice Extract is not allowed to contain any significant amount of naturally occurring lovastatin – thus making it therapeutically ineffective.
c. Nattokinase has been widely available in the US for over two decades. In Canada, NHPD recalled Nattokinase from the market based on theoretical safety concerns. In the absence of any Canadian adverse reaction report associated with Nattokinase for the last 10 years in Canada, expert observers are dumbfounded as to why Health Canada recalled a safe and effective natural product like Nattokinase while simultaneously allowing known synthetic pharma killers to remain in the market.

Geographic revenue leakage – cost to the Canadian economy: Canadian suppliers and retailers are currently being forced to lose business to US internet sites that offer all the products and potencies unavailable in Canada due to regulations. Canadian revenue "leakage" to USA domiciled internet retailers will only increase in future years as Health Canada continues to increase its predatory stranglehold on NHPs.

Injurious effect on the health of Canadians: There is no public evidence Health Canada has ever formerly studied or quantified the damaging effect of removing pre-existing Natural Health Products from the market prior to doing so. Failure to comprehensively quantify how the removal of pre-existing NHPs would affect the future health of Canadians amounts to governmental gross negligence.

Sources:

~ http://www.anh-europe.org/news/anh-exclusive-lightning-more-dangerous-than-herbs-or-vitamins

~ Dr. Joel Lexchin, associate professor, School of Health Policy and Management, York University, Emergency Physician, University Health Network and associate professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario.

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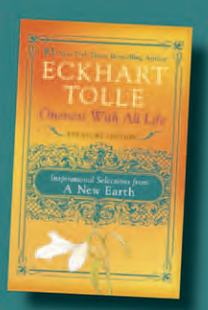
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Evolving beyond polarity

How to get rid of ego as dictator and turn it into messenger and servant and scout to be in your service is the trick. – Joseph Campbell

In my book, *Growing Into Soul: The Next Step in Human Evolution,* the focus is on how we can transcend the limitations of ego and move into a more soulful way of being. I like to think that, as individuals and as a species, we are evolving. Looking around, I am not so sure.

I suggest in the book that certain attributes and ways of thinking no longer serve us and actually prevent growth. These include polarity, aggression, anger, fear, the need to be right, the need to control, denial and the false self.

I will address two of these and write about the others in future columns. The first is polarity. Polarity results in thinking in terms of opposites: mine/yours, right/wrong, good/bad and win/lose. While there are times we need to set boundaries based on these poles, we must begin looking more at those places where polarizing creates more problems than it solves. There is nothing wrong with seeing a situation differently from someone else; it is when we say or think we are right and they are wrong that the trouble starts.

There is rarely much to be gained in trying to convince someone they are wrong. It is much better to acknowledge you both see things differently and to focus on where to go from there. Focusing on creatively resolving polarity is one way we grow into our higher selves.

Releasing polarity and anger means we stop blaming others for what we ourselves are creating in our own hearts and minds…It means choosing peace.

Polarity often results in anger, which is an emotional response based on one's interpretation of a situation. Even if only at a subconscious level, judgement precedes anger. Notice what happens in a movie theatre. If a good guy on the screen gets hurt there is quiet outrage in the audience. If a bad guy gets hurt, often there is cheering. If someone cuts you off in traffic, you might be angry. If the ambulance driver cuts someone off while rushing your injured child to the hospital, you are grateful.

Anger is a result of how we interpret the intentions of another or the situation. It can also result from a mismatch between what ego wants to happen and what actually happens. Anger is very much an ego-driven emotion. Anger has a purpose biologically in that it increases adrenaline levels, facilitating the fight or flight response.

Outside of life threatening situations, the energy of anger is often toxic. If expressed as aggression, it can result in inappropriate or ineffective behaviours. If held inside, it can produce bitterness, resentment, depression and a host of stress related health problems.

Anger is often blamed on others' behaviour when it is really a signal to ourselves that we are not using effective strategies. It is a sign that ego's strategies are not working and we must tune into our higher wisdom to assess what is really going on in our lives.

Releasing polarity and anger means we stop blaming others for what we ourselves are creating in our own hearts and minds. It means taking responsibility for not adding any more emotional toxicity to already compromised situations. It means choosing peace.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, Deep Powerful Change hypnosis CDs and new "Creating Healthy Relationships" series, visit www.gwen.ca See display ad this issue.

Why the world doesn't end



Renewal in times of loss

The overwhelming problems and massive threats... also function as a cosmic wake-up call intended to awaken us from the sleep of so-called "reality." Something subtle and enduring about the world is trying to be remembered and be rediscovered and it seems to take some big trouble to awaken to it.

To be alive at this time means to be exposed to the raw forces of nature as well as the rough edges of culture. The world is awash with profound problems and puzzling changes and beset with seemingly endless conflicts. It is a time of great uncertainty and surprising changes that include extreme weather patterns as well as the rise of religious and political extremists. We are subject to increasing levels of fear about the health and future of the planet we live on as all the great questions about life and death and all the great fears about dissolution and destruction hang in the polluted air and trouble the waters all around us.

As tensions in the outer world escalate, anxieties intensify on both collective and individual levels. People feel more helpless and unable to control things; not only more isolated, but also at odds with one another. Facing huge issues, massive threats and seemingly impossible tasks, there seems to be no end to our problems and time seems to be running out on everyone. We become like a "collective Job," inundated with loss, tested by both God and the devil and left alone to face various scenarios of impending doom. Increasingly, it does seem that everything might come to a screaming end, that it could happen at any moment and that it might happen from a mistake of culture or from a catastrophe of nature.

Our common fate places us in the winding down of some great cycle that has entered a dramatic turning point and it is not clear where we might end up. Call it the great turning or the great churning. Call it the end of time or the "archetype of apocalypsis" when everything seems to happen at once and nothing remains in place for very long. As the archetype of radical change, *apocalypsis* presents a pattern in which a shattering of forms occurs before the world as we know it can be reconstituted.

When not taken literally or religiously, the archetypal dynamic of apocalypse can refer to what happens when the web of life loosens, when the veils lift and the underlying forces of life become more palpable and evident, but also more transparent. Old structures may collapse and once vital systems may fall apart yet other patterns and barely imagined designs are on the verge of being revealed.

When seen as an archetypal dynamic, apocalypsis describes a troubling period of uncertain duration in which the underlying tensions and oppositions of life become uncovered and rise to the surface. As the veil of normality lifts, the growing disparity between the rich and the poor, between those suffering in poverty and those living in luxury, becomes revealed. At the same time, age-old conflicts between ethnic groups rise with a vengeance to the surface and religious factions become willing to destroy the world rather than find ways to heal their theological rifts.

To be alive at this time means to become a witness, willing or unwilling, to the loosening of the web of nature as well as the unravelling of the fabric of culture. It means to be present as accepted patterns dissolve, as institutions become hollow and uncertainty comes to rule. The overwhelming problems and massive threats are real enough, but they also function as a cosmic wake-up call intended to awaken us from the sleep of so-called "reality." Something subtle and enduring about the world is trying to be remembered and be rediscovered and it seems to take some big trouble to awaken to it.

Seen in mythical terms, the world drifts from cosmos towards chaos, it slips from order to collapse, as everything shifts back towards the original state of chaos that existed before creation. The issue is not the literal "end of the world," but the winding down and speeding up that happens on the downside of a cosmic cycle. At the mythic level, ends and beginnings are essentially connected and one keeps leading to the other as the eternal drama of life continues to unfold – when the end seems near ancient and lasting things are also close and waiting to be rediscovered.

Disorientation and disorder are essential aspects of apocalypsis, but so are revelation and renewal. Yet when looked at with an eye for apocalypsis, what we find at the end are both last things and things that last. The deeper texts of life are full of lasting ideas: postscripts and even post-scriptures that can indicate the ways to salvage time and redeem meaningful aspects of life.

Apocalypsis presents the psychic condition of being betwixt and between, especially between the ending of one era and the beginning of another. It is what the ancient Kalahari Bushmen called a *ja-ni,* or a "yes-no" situation. Is the world going to end? Yes, for the world as we know it has already ended in *continued p.29...*

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– Groucho Marx

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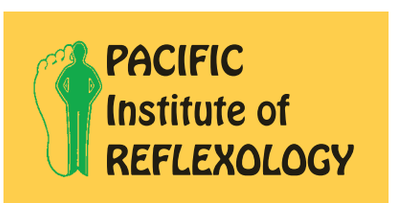
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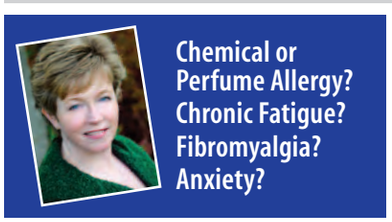
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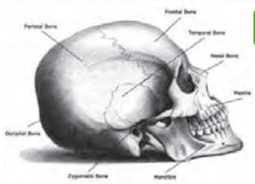
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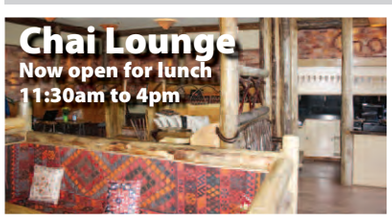
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*...**World Doesn't End** from pg. 23*

many ways. Is it the end of the world altogether? Not likely, as what we call the "real world" is secretly connected to what people used to call the "world behind the world." The manifest world grows old at times; it suffers varying levels of dissolution and collapse, yet it regenerates again from the eternal world that has been behind it all along.

An apocalyptic period can involve the uncovering of many wounds and revelations of collective and cultural shadows. Yet it can also lead to the discovery of new directions in life as well as a rediscovery of old and valuable ideas that had been forgotten. With the collapse of familiar structures, there can be a loosening of restrictive patterns as well as revelations of the roots of renewal. At the end of an era, fact approaches myth and myth can take on its old meaning of "emergent truth." When all seems lost and logic is of no avail, when everything seems about to unravel, mythic imagination and narrative intelligence can offer surprising ways of not only surviving but also contributing to the renewal waiting to happen.

A mythic inoculation

Once we recognize that we are in a paradoxical, yes-no situation it makes more sense to face the psychological presence of apocalyptic fears and terrors. Accepting that we are caught in the middle of a great turnaround helps make sense of the tumultuous events and discordant feelings all around us. It is in the middle of what seems like the very end of everything that things secretly begin again. Caught between fears of the bitter end and secret hopes of it all beginning again, we might learn to be truly human again. Despite the contemporary fixation on rational thought and the insistence on facts and measurements, the human soul is mythic by nature and mystical by inclination. To be truly human is to be both psychological and mythological, for we are mythic by nature, each imbued with a living story and each tied to the enduring story of this world that ever teeters on the edge of annihilation.

Modern parlance uses myth to mean something that is patently false, yet what is most true is also most elusive and cannot be captured by logic or arrived at by reason alone. Where reason fails and logic stumbles, myth waits to open paths of imagination and understanding. A mythical story is an installment of eternity that can interrupt the march of time and break the spell of the ordinary world. Myths are not things of the past, but rather the eternal, ongoing stories that point to the underlying truths and essential meanings of the continuous creation of the world.

The world around us is a place of mystery and wonder and revelation waiting to happen; it is always more that it seems to be. As the endless story of the world reaches another cosmological turning point and the fabric of life loosens, the veil between this world and the Otherworld becomes more transparent. Things become both impossible and more possible at the same time. Just as time seems to be running out, the sense of the eternal tries to slip back into awareness. That is what the old stories say and the old stories have survived the ages and all the previous stages that seemed surely to be the last act of creation. The wonder of creation is that it continues to create; it is the ongoing story that starts over again each time it reaches the End.

An old mythic idea suggests that each human soul can be an agent of the eternal, each having a touch of genius and each being born at a time when they can be useful to creation. The deepest human resources tend to awaken amidst the greatest human disasters. Each carries from before birth a unique arrangement of character, talents and gifts that are needed in this world. When the troubles are all around us, everyone can find some place where they are needed, where they can help heal all that is wounded and help protect all that is threatened.

Mythic threads are woven into us from the very beginning and those who can imagine how things come to an end can also find the threads of imagination for beginning again. Being near the end also means being near the threads of existence and being invited to lend a hand in the great reweaving of the garment of life. Life reaches not a final end, but a vital edge of revelation rippling with sudden disclosures and pregnant with surprising insights. In such a time of many endings, it becomes important to have a sense for lasting things, a narrative feel for life and a reverence for the unseen. In the end, or near it, the real issue is not simply the future of humanity, but the presence of eternity.



Excerpted from **Why the World Doesn't End** (Chapter one, "Apocalypse Now") by **Michael Meade** (Greenfire Press).
February 22: Michael Meade presents a talk & booksigning, 7:30PM, Unitarian Church. Tx $15, Banyen Books, 604-737-8858. **February 23:** "Finding Genius in Your Life" workshop with Michael Meade, 9:30AM-5PM, Centre for Peace, Vancouver. Tickets $95 Banyen Books 604-737-8858. Visit mosaicvoices.org

The machine's embrace

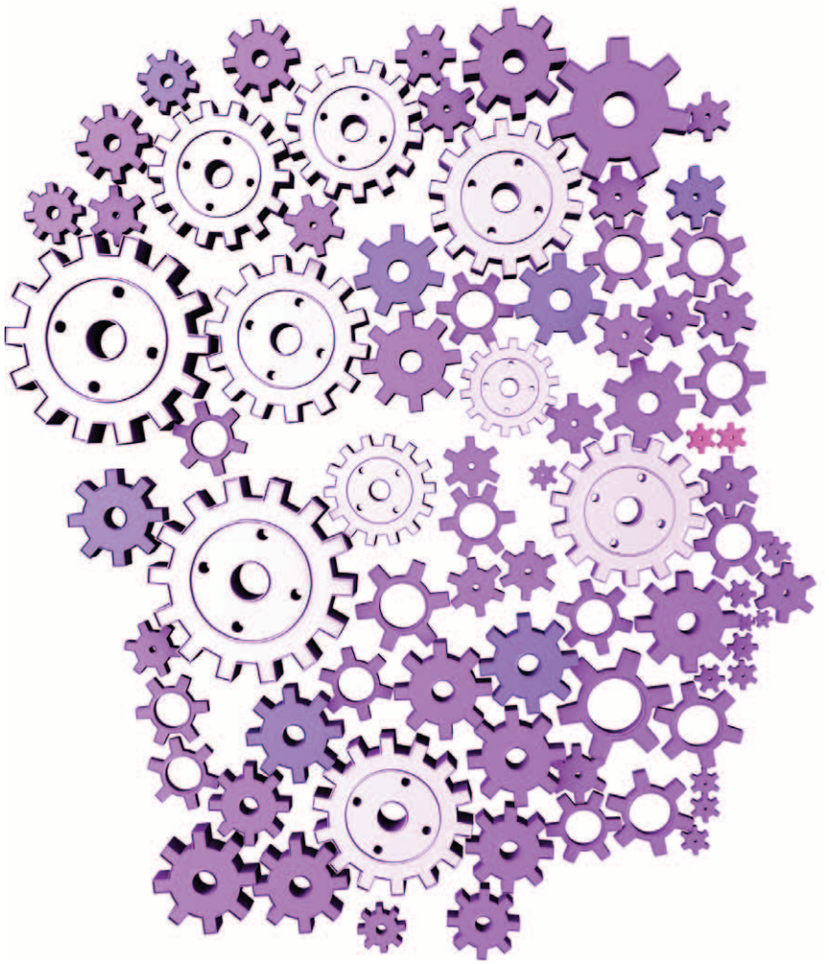


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Years ago I read a fantasy short story – I've long since forgotten the author's name – that begins with the death of a worker on an assembly line. The man's fatal heart attack leaves his wife to grieve alone in an empty bed. Then late one night at the factory, after all the workers have left for home, there is movement at the work station where the man had laboured for years. Pulleys stretch and bolts break. After detaching from its moorings, a robotic apparatus lumbers across the darkened factory floor and ventures outside into the cobbled streets. The thing makes its way into town, searching for the man's home in the moonlight. Finding a side door, it enters and stealthily crawls into bed next to the dead man's sleeping wife, in an attempt to comfort her in its cold, metal embrace. As I recall, the story ended there.

I thought back to this uncanny tale after reading a news report about a recent study on the addictive qualities of digital tech. The study noted the increasing number of people who cannot bear to be apart from their gadgets, with many of us going to bed with our iPhones, Androids or Blackberries. Our gadgets are the first thing we interact with at day's start and the last thing at day's end.

In the pages of *The Guardian Weekly,* writer Kevin Barry describes waking in the morning with the intention to write fiction, focused and undisturbed, "… and I know the last thing I should do now, because it will shatter my concentration before I even begin, is go online. But, of course, I reach to the bedside table and grasp the iPhone."

I can relate. My new Blackberry Playbook recently made it to my bedside table. I've never been much for threesomes, but now it's me, my tablet and my partner. Actually, a foursome, if you count my partner's iPad2, which is often at her side.

For many, if not most people, this 4G/wifi intimacy with our gadgets is the new normal and hardly cause for alarm. Personally, I'm a bit unnerved. Although no Luddite, I have strained to keep my electronic habits to a minimum. I don't play videogames or instant message, although I do check my email a bit too frequently for my own good. I intend that my digital media and devices serve me, not the other way around.

I've been an early adopter, but mostly I'm a reluctant accepter. And now here I am chased under the duvet by one of my own gadgets; I love the easy access to my favourite websites and blogs, but I know there's a price for such a cornucopia of content. One loser for sure is my attention span, which is being whittled down to 140 character duration. It seems harder than ever to focus on a book for a sustained period of time.

My Playbook has plenty of pals on the homefront. In a household with just two people, there are multiple iPods and laptops, plus several cell phones, both smart and dumb. There's a rat's nest of chargers and electrical cords above the dishwasher, sustaining our devices the way a refrigerator box of cheap wine powers guests at a kitchen party. Think that's an over-amped metaphor? Not when electronic devices can 'talk' to each other.

In a world of food shortages, child soldiers, predator drones, broken-down nuclear reactors and sovereign debt, an excessive number of gadgets on the domestic front hardly seems like much of a problem. On a per capita basis, the North American lifestyle puts us in the top 10 percent, globally. By the standards of previous generations, our lives are quite magical.

But as Bob Dylan once remarked of an earlier period of transformation, "Something is happening here, but you don't know what it is, do you Mr. Jones?"

In his 2010 book *What Technology Wants,* former *Wired* editor Kevin Kelly wistfully describes his pre-college days of travelling through Southeast Asia with little more than a knapsack and his wits. To this day, Kelly has no Facebook account and "doesn't twitter." (I believe him; the correct verb is 'tweet.') Yet he is one of our foremost commentators on technology and our relationship to it and has a studio full of gadgets sent to him for review by tech companies from around the world.

Kelly has come up with a new word to describe the sum of the objects and processes midwived by our technologies, from combustion engines to 3-D printers to nanotechnology and beyond. His word ecompasses all the old-school bits of information that he says are rather "wispy," including "the calendar, the alphabet, the compass, penicillin, double-entry accounting, the U.S. Constitution, the contraceptive pill, domestication of animals, zero, germ theory, lasers, electricity, the silicon chip, and so on." It's the Internet plus everything else. He calls this sum of embodied and disembodied knowledge the "technium."

Kelly is fascinated with how the appendages of the technium reach out to seduce us. "The technology of TV had a remarkable ability to beckon people at specific times and then hold them enthralled for hours," he writes. "Its creative commercials told them to acquire more technologies. They obeyed. I noticed that other bossy technologies, such as the car, also seemed to be able to get people to serve them, and to prod them to acquire and use still more technologies (freeways, drive-in theatres, fast food)."

The technium has become more insistent over time. When travelling across Europe in the late eighties, I met up with a family member at the home of her friend, a Protestant minister living near Barcelona. After introductions were made, the minister's kids were literally crawling all over me, inspecting my Swatch and gaping at me. The minister gently shooed them away and sheepishly explained the family had no television to keep them entertained. In their rural neighbourhood, foreign visitors were a high-bandwidth entertainment. I had little doubt it had been that way for many generations.

Today, when I visit some friends in their middle-

class neighbourhood in the Lower Mainland, their children rarely say hello or even look up from their video-game consoles. They aren't bad kids, but welcomes are trumped by Wii and Xbox. A visitor's presence is hardly enough to pull them away from a violent dreamworld spun by electrons.

In 2010, author Sherry Turkle drew attention to the now-commonplace coffeeshop scene, with adults in silent communion with their fetish objects, like post-industrial monks. "At a coffee shop a block from my home, almost everyone is on a computer or a smart phone as they drink their coffee. These people are not my friends yet somehow I miss their presence," she writes in her book *Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other.*

"These days, being connected depends not on distance from each other but from available communications technology," the author observes. "Most of the time, we carry that technology with us. In fact, being alone can start to seem like a precondition for being together because it is easier to communicate if you can focus, without interruption, on your screen." As an iPod-wearing solipsist, I reluctantly count myself among these people. And there's a good chance you do too.Turkle's daughter confessed to her how she prefers texting to answering the phone because person-to-person talk offers no control over the communication. I'm reminded of a friend whose daughter lost her notebook in an apartment break-in. It wasn't the loss of the computer itself that troubled her most, but her compromised networking. "I've lost all my friends," she confessed to her father. She was referring to Facebook.

It seems the machine has broken free from its moorings to embrace us in our places of work, restaurants, the gym, our homes and even in our beds, comforting us with our own attention-fracturing tweets, instant messages and Facebook updates. And its embrace is getting tighter. A data-mining engine that never sleeps, the technium is learning more and more of our most intimate details, through every keystroke and swipe.

"The technium contains 170 quadrillion computer chips wired up into one mega-scale computing platform," observes Kevin Kelly. "The total number of transistors in this global network is now approximately the same as the number of neurons in your brain. And the number of links among files in this network – think of all the links among all the web pages of the world – is about equal to the number of synapse links in your brain. Thus, this growing planetary electronic membrane is already comparable to the complexity of a human brain."

This "membrane" has three billion artificial eyes in the form of phones and webcams and its server farms consume five percent of the world's electricity. It appears to be evolving.

Kelly points to evidence of strange "mutations" cropping up in the Internet's massive river of traffic and they aren't all due to hacking, machine error or line damage. The computer scientists "are left with a few percent that somehow changed themselves. In other words, a small fraction of what the technium communicates originates not from any of its known human-made nodes but from the system at large. The technium is whispering to itself."

The author argues there is reason to believe the technium is becoming "autonomous," that is, moving beyond human control and starting to behave like any other self-directed organism. He notes that, over time, on a global scale the Internet has been shifting its methods of organization spontaneously, with the flow of bits demonstrating a fractal pattern of self-organization. "This observation doesn't prove autonomy. But autonomy is often self-evident long before it can be proved."

For some tech observers, notably the community of Silicon Valley "extropians" and "transhumanists," it's all good news. They insist computing technology, along with advances in genetic engineering and nanotechnology, will reach a stage where humanity and machines will merge. Their foremost exponent, the inventor and thinker Ray Kurzweil, calls this prophesied union the "singularity."

Extrapolating from Moore's law (computer processing power doubles approximately every two years), the 64 year-old thinker believes the singularity will arrive in his lifetime. A great fan of life extension practices, Kurzweil eats well, exercises regularly and pops vitamins like Tic Tacs in the fervent hope he will live long enough to upload his consciousness into the "cloud" and still retain his personal identity. The guy's a big thinker with big ambitions: he plans to survive death.

In the 2009 biographical film *Transcendent Man*, Kurzweil muses on the existential black hole that all of us must confront in our final moments, which may be preceded by pain and misery. "It's such a profoundly sad, lonely feeling that I really can't bear it," he confesses. "So I go back to thinking about how I'm not going to die," he adds brightly.

Kurzweil seems single-minded and somewhat self-absorbed in his goal of personal eternity. Yet his story is given deeper dimension when the film traces his relationship with his father, a composer who died at 58 from heart disease. His "genius was thwarted by life," Kurzeweil nsists. Old family film strips of the young boy and his doting dad underscore the deep love between them and a loss from which the son never recovered.



Olson cartoon originally published in the Vancouver Courier, July 8, 2011.

The son has archived the father's personal papers, including his musical scores. He has compiled recollections from those who knew him. Most notably, Kurzweil has recovered DNA from his father's grave. With all these elements, he believes the technology of the post-singularity world will allow the reconstruction of his beloved father. He's serious. *Dead* serious.

The technium has been growing for a long time, ever since a rock went off-label as a hominid's tool. But only now has its exponential increase made it a serious challenge to human skill on a daily basis. So far, we have seen the entertaining, surface-level challenges ranging from champion chess-playing (the defeat of Gary Kasparov by "Deep *continued p.34...*

What do Indians want?



Thomas King is one of Canada's premier Native public intellectuals. For the past 50 years, he has worked as an activist for Native causes. He has also taught Native literature and history at universities in the US and Canada. He is the bestselling author of five novels, including Medicine River *and* Green Grass, Running Water*, two collections of short stories and the 2003 Massey Lectures,* The Truth About Stories*. He most recently published* The Inconvenient Indian*. Look for more non-fiction writing by Thomas King in subsequent issues of* Common Ground. .

Great question. The problem is it's the wrong question to ask. While there are certainly Indians in North America, the Indians of this particular question don't exist. The Indians of this question are "the Indian" that Canada and the United States have created for themselves. And as long as the question is asked in that way, there will never be the possibility of an answer. Better to ask what the Lubicon Cree of Alberta want or the Brantford Mohawk of Ontario or the Zuni of New Mexico or the Hupa of northern California or the Tlingit of Alaska.

But I'd just as soon forget the question entirely. There's a better question to ask. One that will help us to understand the nature of contemporary North American Indian history. A question that we can ask of both the past and the present. What do Whites want? No, it's not a trick question. And I'm not being sarcastic. Native history in North America as written has never really been about Native people. It's been about Whites and their needs and desires. What Native peoples wanted has never been a vital concern, has never been a political or social priority.

The Lakota didn't want Europeans in the Black Hills, but Whites wanted the gold that was there. The Cherokee didn't want to move from Georgia to Indian Territory (Oklahoma), but Whites wanted the land. The Cree of Quebec weren't at all keen on vacating their homes to make way for the Great Whale project, but there's excellent money in hydroelectric power. The California Indians did not ask to be enslaved by the Franciscans and forced to build that order's missions.

What do Whites want? The answer is quite simple, and it's been in plain sight all along. Land.

Whites want land.

Sure, Whites want Indians to disappear, and they want Indians to assimilate, and they want Indians to understand that everything that Whites have done was for their own good because Native people, left to their own devices, couldn't make good decisions for themselves. All that's true. From a White point of view, at least. But it's a lower order of true. It's a spur-of-the-moment true, and these ideas have changed over time. Assimilation was good in the 1950s, but bad in the 1970s. Residential schools were the answer to Indian education in the 1920s, but by the twenty-first century governments were apologizing for the abuse that Native children had suffered at the hands of Christian doctrinaires, pedophiles and sadists. In the 1880s, the prevailing wisdom was to destroy Native cultures and languages so that Indians could find civilization. Today, the non-Native lament is that Aboriginal cultures and languages may well be on the verge of extinction. These are all important matters, but if you pay more attention to them than they deserve, you will miss the larger issue.

The issue that came ashore with the French and the English and the Spanish, the issue that was the *raison d'etre* for each of the colonies, the issue that has made its way from coast to coast to coast and is with us today, the issue that has never changed, never varied, never faltered in its resolve is the issue of land. The issue has always been land. It will always be land, until there isn't a square foot of land left in North America that is controlled by Native people.



At the Lake Mohonk conference in October of 1886, one of the participants, Charles Cornelius Coffin Painter, who served as a lobbyist for the Indian Rights Association, pointed out the obvious, that the treaties made with Native people had been little more than expediencies. In his talk, Painter quoted General William Tecumseh Sherman, who had said that treaties "were never made to be kept, but to serve a present purpose, to settle a present difficulty in the easiest manner possible, to acquire a desired good with the least possible compensation, and then to be disregarded as soon as this purpose was tainted and we were strong enough to enforce a new and more profitable arrangement."

This is the same General Sherman who philosophized that "The more Indians we kill this year, the fewer we will need to kill the next." Painter didn't necessarily agree with Sherman, but he understood that the overall goal of removals, allotments, treaties, reservations and reserves, terminations and relocations, was not simply to limit and control the movement of Native peoples, but more importantly to relieve them of their land base.

Land. If you understand nothing else about the history of Indians in North America, you need to understand that the question that really matters is the question of land. Land has always been a defining element of Aboriginal culture. Land contains the languages, the stories and the histories of a people. It provides water, air, shelter and food. Land participates in the ceremonies and the songs. And land is home. Not in an abstract way. The Blackfoot in Alberta live in the shadow of Ninastiko or Chief Mountain. The mountain is a special place for the Blackfoot and friends on the reserve at Standoff have told me more than once that, as long as they can see the mountain, they know they are home.

For non-Natives, land is primarily a commodity, something that has value for what you can take from it or what you can get for it... The Alberta Tar Sands is an excellent example of a non-Native understanding of land. It is, without question, the dirtiest, most environmentally insane energy-extraction project in North America, probably in the world, but the companies that are destroying landscapes and watersheds in Alberta

continue merrily along, tearing up the earth because there are billions to be made out of such corporate devastation. The public has been noticeably quiet about the matter, and neither the politicians in Alberta nor the folks in Ottawa have been willing to step in and say, "Enough," because, in North American society, when it comes to money, there is no such thing as enough.

We all know the facts and figures. Carbon emissions from the production of one barrel of tar sands oil are eight times higher than the emissions from a conventional barrel. The production of each barrel of tar sands oil requires at least three barrels of fresh water, 90 percent of which never makes it back into the watershed. The waste water winds up in a series of enormous tailing ponds that cover some 50 square kilometres and is so poisonous that it kills on contact.

Yet, in spite of all the scientific evidence, oil corporations, with the aid and abetment of government, are expanding their operations, breaking new ground, as it were, and building thousands of miles of pipeline – the Keystone Pipeline, the Northern Gateway Pipeline, the Transmountain Pipeline – that will take Alberta crude from Fort McMurray to refineries and markets in the United States (Illinois, Oklahoma, and Texas) and in Canada (Kitimat and Vancouver)... there is little chance that North America will develop a functional land ethic until it finds a way to overcome its irrational addiction to profit. Unfortunately, there are no signs that that's going to happen any time soon.

In 1868 the Lakota and the U.S. government signed a peace treaty at Fort Laramie which guaranteed that the Black Hills would remain with the Lakota Nation, and that the Powder River Country in northeastern Wyoming would be closed to White settlement. However, just six years later, in 1874, an army expedition led by, of all people, George Armstrong Custer discovered gold in the Black Hills at French Creek and before you could say "Fort Laramie Treaty," White miners swarmed into the Black Hills and began digging mines, sluicing rivers, blasting away the sides of mountains with hydraulic cannons and clear-cutting the forests in the Hills for the timber. The army was supposed to keep Whites out of the Hills. But they didn't. A great many histories will tell you that the military was powerless to stop the flood of Whites who came to the Hills for the gold, but the truth of the matter is that the army didn't really try.

The Fort Laramie Treaty still stands as a valid agreement and the Lakota have never given up their claim to the Hills, nor have they stopped fighting for the land's return. So I can only imagine how they felt as they watched Six Grandfathers being turned into a national tourist attraction. Six Grandfathers is the mountain in the Hills that became Mount Rushmore after it was renamed for a New York lawyer in 1885.

Then in 1980, in United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians, the Supreme Court ruled that the Black Hills had been illegally taken. The solution, however, wasn't to return the Hills to the Lakota. Instead the court instructed that the original purchase price of $25,000 plus interest be paid to the tribe. After the long addition was over, the total came to over $106 million.

$106 million. And as they had done in 1875, the Lakota refused the settlement. Money was never the issue. They wanted the Hills back. As for the money, it stays in an interest-bearing account to this day.

From a Native perspective, Indian land is Indian land. From a contemporary, somewhat legal North American perspective, Native land is land that belongs to the federal government and is on indefinite loan to a certain category of Native people. To say that these two views are in conflict is to state the obvious. Indian land as Indian land was certainly the idea behind early treaties and agreements.

One of the great phrases to come out of the treaty process is "as long as the grass is green and the waters run." The general idea behind the phrase is not new. Charlemagne supposedly used such language in the eighth century, when he declared that "all Frisians would be fully free, the born and the unborn, so long as the wind blows from heaven and the child cries, grass grows green and flowers bloom, as far as the sun rises and the world stands."

Great Britain, the United States and Canada, depending on how you want to count, signed well over 400 treaties with Native tribes in North America. I haven't read them all, but none of the ones I have read contains the phrase. So, I've always wondered if "as long as the grass is green and the waters run" was ever actually used in a treaty.

What do Whites want? No, it's not a trick question. And I'm not being sarcastic. Native history in North America as written has never really been about Native people. It's been about Whites and their needs and desires. What Native peoples wanted has never been a vital concern.

I'm betting that poetic constructions such as "as long as the grass is green and the waters run," "Great White Father," and "Red Children" were part of the performances, the speeches and the oral promises that attended treaty negotiations and did not necessarily find their way into the official transcript.

Treaties, after all, were not vehicles for protecting land or even sharing land. They were vehicles for acquiring land. Almost without fail, throughout the history of North America, every time Indians signed a treaty with Whites, Indians lost land. I can't think of a single treaty whereby Native people came away with more land than when they started. Such an idea, from a nonNative point of view, would have been dangerously absurd.

In fact, treaties have been so successful in separating Indians from their land that I'm surprised there isn't a national holiday to honour their good work. But we could fix that. We could, if we were so inclined, turn Columbus Day and Victoria Day into Treaty Day. After all, Columbus didn't discover America, and Queen Victoria never set foot in Canada... Of course, no one in Canada or the United States is going to support a holiday that isn't a celebration of national power and generosity, so we'd have to disguise it, much the way we do Thanksgiving.

Now I don't want to give anyone the impression that I think treaties are a bad idea. Treaties aren't the problem. Keeping the promises made in the treaties, on the other hand, is a different matter.

One of the complaints that Whites have had about Aboriginal people is that they didn't know what to do with land or that they weren't using the land to its full potential. And North America has been quick to rally around the old aphorism "use it or lose it." Ironically, Canada currently finds itself in a pseudo-Native position with regard to the far north. Knowing that the Arctic is a treasure trove of oil and gas, minerals and precious metals, and fish, the United States has been pushing jurisdictional boundaries, insisting that the Northwest Passage is an international waterway rather than a part of Canada. In 1969, the United States sent the S. S. Manhattan to sail into the Passage without first getting Canadian permission. In 1985, the U.S. icebreaker Polar Sea did the same thing. Nasty words flew back and forth. One solution to this problem that is being bandied about is to strike a treaty, wherein the United States recognizes the Passage as Canadian waters and Canada gives the United States the right to travel the waterway unimpeded.

A treaty with the United States. That should work out well. Lost in all of this gunship diplomacy was the 1953 saga of 87 Inuit who were moved from Port Harrison to Grise Fiord. The official reason Canadian bureaucrats gave for the move was that it would allow the Inuit to continue to live off the land and maintain their traditional ways. The unofficial reason was that Canada wanted to use the Inuit as placeholders in the continuing debate over who had territorial rights to the High Arctic and its resources. The government has always maintained that the families who relocated did so voluntarily, while the Inuit maintain that the moves were forced.

Wherever the truth lies, it is amusing to watch politicians validating Canada's land claims in the far north on the backs of Aboriginal people. It's ours, Ottawa tells the world. Our people are there. When it comes to the matter of land, one of the key questions is "What is the proper use of land?" This is both an historical and a contemporary consideration in Native rights. In the early days, hunting and gathering were seen as inferior uses of the land compared to farming. Where Indians did farm, their farming practices were considered inferior to those of Whites. And these days, heaven help the tribe or band that wishes to keep a section of land in its natural state when a golf course or a ski resort or a strip mine comes looking for a home.

Sometimes, a close reading of history is helpful in understanding the question of land and sometimes representative stories will do just as well. Personally, I prefer stories. And I happen to have several that you might consider.

Adapted from **The Inconvenient Indian** by **Thomas King** (Doubleday Canada). Reprinted with permission.

...*Open letter* from p.11

changes – apart from the target trait – induced by the process of transgene insertion (Heinemann et al., 2011; Schubert, 2002).

Puzstai (2001) and others have consequently argued that well-conducted feeding trials are one of the best ways of detecting such unpredictable changes. Yet feeding trials are not mandatory for regulatory approval and the scientific credibility of those which have been published to date has been challenged (Domingo, 2007; Pusztai et al., 2003; Spiroux de Vendômois et al., 2009). For example, Snell et al. (2012), who assessed the quality of 12 long term (>96 days) and 12 multigenerational studies, concluded: "The studies reviewed here are often linked to an inadequate experimental design that has detrimental effects on statistical analysis… the major insufficiencies not only include lack of use of near isogenic lines but also statistical power underestimation [and], absence of repetitions…"

In a study conducted by the Royal Society of Canada at the request of the Canadian government, numerous weaknesses of GM regulation in Canada were identified.

Apparently, the same issues of experimental design and analysis raised about this (Seralini) risk-finding study were not of concern to critics when the studies did not identify risk, resulting in ill-informed decision-makers. In the end, it is a major problem for science and society when current regulatory protocols approve GMO crops based on little to no useful data upon which to assess safety.

5) Science and politics

Governments have become habituated to using science as a political football. For example, in a study conducted by the Royal Society of Canada at the request of the Canadian government, numerous weaknesses of GM regulation in Canada were identified (RSC, 2001). The failure of the Canadian government to meaningfully respond to the many recommended changes was detailed by Andree (2006). Similarly, the expert recommendations of the international IAASTD report, produced by 400 researchers over six years, that GMOs are unsuited to the task of advancing global agriculture have been resolutely ignored by policymakers. Thus, while proclaiming evidence-based decision-making, governments frequently use science solely when it suits them.

6) Conclusion

When those with a vested interest attempt to sow unreasonable doubt around inconvenient results, or when governments exploit political opportunities by picking and choosing from scientific evidence, they jeopardize public confidence in scientific methods and institutions, and also put their own citizenry at risk. Safety testing, science-based regulation and the scientific process itself depend crucially on widespread trust in a body of scientists devoted to the public interest and professional integrity. If instead, the starting point of a scientific product assessment is an approval process rigged in favour of the applicant, backed up by systematic suppression of independent scientists working in the public interest, then there can never be an honest, rational or scientific debate.

The international IAASTD report, produced by 400 researchers over six years, that GMOs are unsuited to the task of advancing global agriculture have been resolutely ignored by policymakers.

Source: http://independentsciencenews.org

The above letter was endorsed by hundreds of eminent scientists from around the world. See http://independentsciencenews.org/health/seralini-and-science-nk603-rat-study-roundup/ for a list of signatories and cited references.

...*Olson* from p.31

Blue" in 1997) to trivia game shows (the defeat of contestants on the game show *Jeopardy* by "Watson" in 2011). Whatever classified Golems are being constructed in the covert world of "black projects" have yet to reach public attention. Yet from the declassified world alone, we've seen drones the size of dragonflies and dog-like robots that navigate difficult landscapes like border collies; what happens when these appendages of the technium attain a semblance of 'mind'?

When it comes to predictions, the track record of futurists ain't that great and neither Kurzweil nor Kelly has any enthusiasm for examining the dark labour/capital underbelly of our present technologies. The 'dark satanic mills' of William Blake's Industrial Revolution are gone; yet today's smart phones are knocked off in Southeast Asian sweatshops by companies that stack their underpaid, overworked employees in barracks like cordwood. With every production cycle, we toss away our technobaubles like Bic lighters, oblivious to the metallic effluent streaming under children's feet in electronic scavenging towns thousands of miles away.

The evangelists for high technology insist such things are a passing phase and that the technium will deal efficiently with waste and inefficiency as it strains toward its Omega Point. I hope so. There's no denying the sticky, wet world of carbon-based life is in a strange dance with the inorganic world of silicon-based intelligence. Our networked gadgets, brilliantly designed and cheaply made, are insinuating themselves into our hands, our pockets and our beds. And soon, I suspect, under our skin as implants.

Only one thing is for certain: humans and machines will transform utterly in this exchange. Heading for the hills or some tech-free reservation – like neoprimitive John the Savage in Aldous Huxley's 1931 novel *Brave New World* – is not a realistic option for the meat-based crowd. It seems the only way past the cyber-situation is through it.

The study noted the increasing number of people who cannot bear to be apart from their gadgets, with many of us going to bed with our iPhones, Androids or Blackberries. Our gadgets are the first thing we interact with at day's start and the last thing at day's end

Considering its contradictory components, it would be premature to interpret the technium as either a monolithic force arraigned against human interests or the mass liberator of the species. For example, the laterally organized internet of the 21st century is a very different beast from the top-down nuclear energy/weapons industry birthed in the 20th century.

"The technium is now as great a force in our world as nature, and our response to the technium should be similar to our response to nature," writes Kevin Kelly in *What Techology Wants*. "We can't demand that technology obey us any more than we can demand that life obey us. Sometimes we should surrender to its lead and bask in its abundance and sometimes we should try to bend its natural course to meet our own. We don't have to do everything that the technium demands, but we can learn to work with this force rather than against it."

This means knowing when to pull the plug-in drug – to use it as a mild stimulant rather than a deadening narcotic – and when to reconnect with the real-time world of human beings with their funky smells, unpredictable behaviour and insistent bandwidth.

As for Ray Kurzweil, I strongly suspect there's more to his cheerleading for the singularity than a self-absorbed desire to whip the Grim Reaper's ass. What he really wants is to touch the hand of his real father, not that of a holographic double. As eccentric as his quest sounds, his heart's desire is not so different from the rest of us: to see the face of love behind the masks of illusion.

www.olscribbler.wordpress.com



An inspiring legacy

Last year ended on a sad note, with the accidental drowning death of Rebecca Tarbotton in Mexico, at 39 years of age. Becky was the inspirational executive director of San Francisco-based Rainforest Action Network, but her roots were in British Columbia.

In an October speech, she eloquently recalled her early days in the environmental movement, including an internship at the David Suzuki Foundation and explained how a few people with purpose, committed to a goal, can accomplish a lot. The speech can be viewed on the Rainforest Action Network website at ran.org

Becky believed strongly in social justice and environmental protection. For her organization's campaign to save rainforests from the devastation of clear-cut logging, she and her colleagues met with book publishers to convince them to stop using paper from threatened areas.



In her role as executive director at Rainforest Action Network, Rebecca Tarbotton spearheaded an initiative to encourage publishers to stop using paper from threatened areas. The organization convinced Disney to eliminate paper connected to the destruction of endangered forests and animals. (Photo courtesy Rainforest Action Network)

Eight agreed, but the biggest victory came after much hard work and imaginative campaigning, when Rainforest convinced Disney to adopt a policy for all its operations, "eliminating paper connected to the destruction of endangered forests and animals." Disney is the world's largest publisher of children's books and magazines, but the policy extends beyond that business to cover paper for all of its interests and supply chains everywhere in the world, including theme parks and cruise ships.

Becky also referred to a seemingly gloomy conversation she once had with me about the failure of environmentalism. She got the point I was trying to make. In her speech, she said, "We need to remember that the work of our time is bigger than climate change. We need to be setting our sights higher and deeper. What we're really talking about, if we're honest with ourselves, is transforming everything about the way we live on this planet..."

After a year when, as U.K. writer George Monbiot says, "governments turned their backs on the living planet...," we need to look to the example of brave and inspiring people like Becky Tarbotton. If our leaders are not willing to lead, it's up to the rest of us.

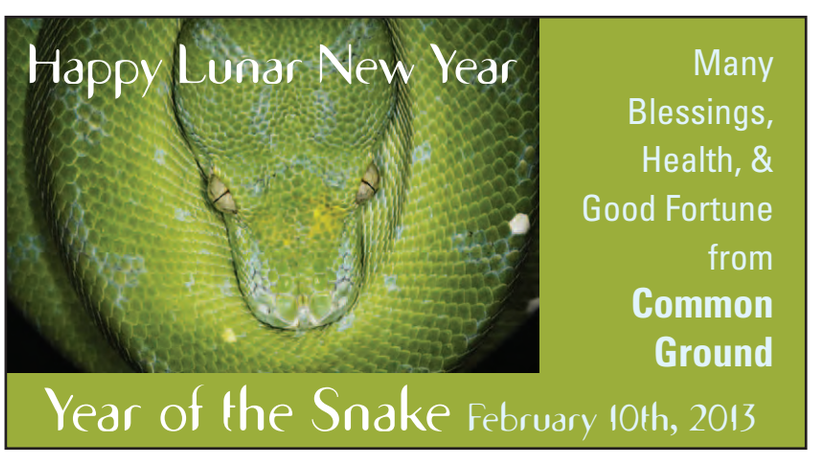
We've seen what kind of "leadership" to expect from our elected representatives. In Canada, our government is gutting environmental protections and regulations in the name of speeding up fossil fuel exploitation, no matter how much this contributes to climate change. As Arctic sea ice melts to levels that experts have referred to as a "global disaster," possibly disappearing within four to 10 years, industry and governments salivate at the prospect of having more open areas for oil and gas drilling, despite their being in sensitive ecosystems with extremely risky conditions.

Unfortunately, too many politicians focus more on the fossil fuel industry than the citizens they are elected to represent... It's not that people support what's happening. A recent Environics poll showed most Canadians believe our governments should do far more to combat climate change. Polls indicate similar trends in the US and UK.

Sometimes, the odds seem so overwhelming it's tempting to run and hide, to give up... But if there's one thing we can learn from Rebecca Tarbotton and the many other dedicated people in the world, it's that we can change the world if we care, think and act.

Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation communications manager **Ian Hanington**. Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org





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FEB 21
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Michael Meade presents "Why the World Doesn't End." Talk & booksigning, 7:30PM, Unitarian Church. Tickets $15, Banyen Books, 604-732-7912.

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"Walk with the Masters" –Free introduction Friday 7:30PM, Burnaby Public Library, 6100 Willingdon Ave., Metrotown. See us also at the Wellness Show, The Brotherhood of Humanity.

FEB 23
Michael Meade workshop: "Finding Genius in Your Life" 9:30AM-5PM, Centre for Peace, Vancouver. Tickets $95 Banyen Books 604-732-7912.

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Group Past Life Regression - Relationship Karma, 10:30-1:30PM, West Vancouver. Are you curious to find out the roots of your relationships? 1-888-606-8463 www.lifebetweenlives.ca/Events.

FEB 24
"New education: toward the art of self-realization"– Our present crises require an education emphasizing cooperation over competition. Humanity's Eldest Brothers return to demonstrate right human relationships and inspire us to create a new civilization where sharing will guarantee a future for all. Sunday 2:30PM, Roundhouse Community Centre, Free. 778-866-9568, share-international.org

FEB 26
Medicating Children and Adolescents: Free presentation by Robert Whitaker & other speakers. 7:30PM, Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 949 West 49th Ave.

MAR 2-3
Soul Voice Workshop: Vancouver, 9:30AM-6PM, $390. Unleash your authentic voice. Listen, sing and communicate from your heart. db.boyko@gmail.com http://www.soulvoice.net/coursesandschedule_north_america.html

MAR 2 & 16 & May 25
Complimentary Energy Healing Bodhi Meditation Workshop 9:30AM-5:30PM. 7740 Alderbridge Way, Richmond, (778) 551-1068/(604) 276-2885, www.putimeditation.org Classes every Thursday 7-9:30PM same address and Mondays Apr15-Jun3, 10-11:30AM at Kitsilano Community Centre.

MAR 15-17
Effortless Living: The Yoga of Krishnamurti with Dr. Ravi Ravindra, Swanwick Centre (near Victoria, BC). Info: 250-744-3354, www.swanwickcentre.ca

MAR 16-24
Celebrate the Grey Whale Migration this Spring at the 27th Annual Pacific Rim Whale Festival in beautiful Ucluelet & Tofino, BC. Info: www.pacificrimwhalefestival.com 250-726-7798.

MAR 17-23
Pure Meditation: The ideal course for anyone wanting to know themselves and God. Includes the Raja-Kriya yogas and brings joy, wisdom & fulfillment. www.selfrealizationcentrecanada.com 1-(604) 740-0898.

MAR 22-24
Spirit Led Path Workshop with John Catalina: An opportunity to go deep into our hearts. Be fulfilled on our own unique path. Letting go of what doesn't serve. South Surrey, 1-760-415-1997, johncatalina@gmail.com, www.spiritledpath.com

MAR 26
Fill Your Workshops With Ease: Avoid the 3 massive mistakes workshop leaders make. With Callan Rush, Vancouver. 7-10PM. Tickets free by pre-registering at 888-686-7409.

APR 20-21
"I Can Do It!" – With Wayne Dyer, Gregg Braden, Doreen Virtue, Caroline Myss & more. Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Vancouver. Register at www.hayhouse.com/events, 800-654-5126.

SEPT 14
Reunion 2013 Centennial High School: Sept. 14. Contact Wilfred Phillips at 3720 Uplands Dr., Nanaimo BC, V9T 2T8; 250-756-0864. Check out www.members.shaw.ca/Centennial2013

ONGOING

Brahma Kumaris Meditation Centre: Learn from the benefits of raja yoga meditation and participate in our lectures and programs. Free as Community Service. 604-436-4795, vancouver@ca.bkwsu.org, www.bkwsu.org

Experience the Power of Soul Healing with Dr. & Master GK Khoe. 604-336-4833 and see website for schedule of February and March events. www.LovePeaceHarmonyVancouver.com

SUNDAYS

Centre for Spiritual Living: Join us every Sunday @ 11 AM for practical spirituality with great music. Meditation: 10:15 AM. 1880 Triumph Street, Suite 8 (at Victoria Drive), Vancouver. Info: 604-321-1225, www.cslvancouver.com

Free Class: Jyoti Meditation – Meditation on the Inner Light: 10:30AM-12noon. Meditation & Ecology Centre, 11011 Shell Rd., Richmond. Drop-ins welcome. Info: Linda: 604-985-5840.

TUESDAYS

Reflexology Student Clinic 6–10pm. One- hour sessions $20. By appointment only. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818. www.pacificreflexology.com







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LIVE YOUR AUTHENTIC NATURE ~ Release negative subconscious patterns and awaken your Full Potential. Contact Edysha @ www.listeningwithin.ca 604-716-5420.

MASSAGE CLASSES

www.academyofmassage.ca NEW WESTMINSTER: Fusion May 10-13; Thai on the Table May 25&26; Traditional Thai June 21-24. SALTSPRING: Thai on the Table April 27&28; Fusion July 11-14. Kristie Straarup r.m.t. 250-537-1219.

ROOMS FOR RENT

NEWLY RENOVATED SPACE: Central North Vancouver. Larger carpeted hall, smaller room. Flexible hours. Michael: 604-987-4935, stradermr1956@gmail.com

OFFICE/CONSULTING/HEALING ROOM for rent in Natural Healing Centre near Broadway/ Cambie Skytrain station. Very reasonable rent, full-time or part-time. Pacific Institute of Reflexology. (604) 875-8818.

SHAMANIC HEALING/COACHING

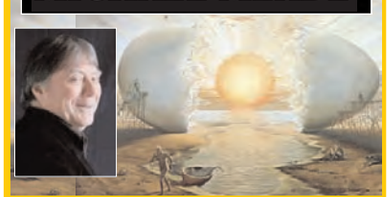
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West of Memphis



From *West of Memphis*. Photo of Damien Echols by Lisa Waddell ©The Commercial Appeal Courtesy Sony of Pictures Classics.

When the hog-tied, naked bodies of three eight-year-old boy scouts were discovered at the bottom of a ditch in 1993 it didn't take long for local authorities in the small town of West Memphis, Arkansas, to find their men. Three working class teenage boys – one whose diary revealed a lurid interest in Satanism – became the chief suspects in the crime. A full confession was extracted from one of the boys. Witnesses and a medical officer corroborated evidence that the victims were killed as part of a blood-thirsty, satanic ritual and the prosecutor had little problem convincing the jury of the boys' guilt. Two of the boys, Jason Baldwin and Jessie Misskelley, got life sentences while Damien Echols was sentenced to death.

I had but vague recollections, snatched from headlines, of the case of the "West Memphis Three," but after watching Amy Berg's simultaneously gripping and appalling documentary *West of Memphis*, I'm sure it will be etched in my mind for years to come. A humongous miscarriage of justice, it became something of a *cause célèbre* after rock stars Eddie Vedder, Natalie Maines and Henry Rollins, along with actor Johnny Depp, got behind the campaign for the boys' release. And *Lord of the Rings* director Peter Jackson anonymously began funding the defence investigation in 2006 with partner Fran Walsh. He also helped produce this riveting film with Echols and wife Lorri Davis, who campaigned on the outside for years for her husband's release. (Out February 8.)

Berg's account follows a chronological sequence of events, opening with the official version of the crime and gradually picks away at flaws in the prosecution's case. It is long at 146 minutes and procedural, but the methodical approach is the film's strength. Berg had excellent access to the key characters in the case and her compilation of news, police and court archive material, and interviews with key witnesses, make the story feel immediate and powerful.

As the defence team exposes incompetence, coercion, political opportunism and fabrication of evidence, what began as a campaign to exonerate the WM3, becomes a searing indictment of the judicial system. What's more, the documentary goes on to "solve" the case with key DNA evidence and very plausible witness information. While it's reassuring that the defence team ultimately wins a victory of sorts, with the release of the wrongfully imprisoned trio after 18 years, there are several stings in the tail. Not least, the case had tragic repercussions for relatives of the victims. And the real killer is still at large.

This month sees the return of the Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival (February 8-17). As well as adrenalin-charged thrills of extreme sports films with names like *Ready To Fly*, *River of No Return* or *Tempting Fear*, there's an array of mountain-inspired shorts and films that delve into outdoors issues. In the opening film *All.I.Can*, the challenges of big mountain skiing are compared to the challenges of global climate change (7.30PM, 11th, Rio). You can also catch global warming doc *Chasing Ice*, with its stunning time-lapse footage of polar and glacier ice in rapid retreat (Rio, 16th, 3PM). The festival takes place at several venues including Centennial Theatre in North Vancouver and Pacific Cinematheque. More details at www.vimff.org

Robert Alstead writes at www.2020Vancouver.com



The 3 Critical Skills for Success in Your Workshop, Retreat and Seminar Business!

By: Callan Rush, Guest Contributor

In my 10+ years leading, promoting, facilitating (and participating in) Workshops and Seminars… I've discovered Everything you need to be successful in your workshop business falls under these 3 skill sets:

Magnetize – Mesmerize – Monetize

Magnetize is about knowing how to create magnetic marketing that attract droves of your ideal clients to you... and to your events. Whether it's using email, Facebook, offline ads, posters, brochures etc... it's about knowing exactly which communications to put out there... and exactly when they need to go out. The result, of course, is having each of your events completely filled with eager participants!

Mesmerize is about designing and delivering your workshops in such a way that everybody learns, has fun and falls in LOVE with you and your information! Most importantly, your participants leave with their issues and challenges completely handled, as you've delivered value well beyond your promise!

Monetize is about learning to create massive profits with your workshop, seminar and retreat business. This includes learning the art and science of authentic selling... so it feels great for you to offer your programs and products to the world... and your participants are grateful for the opportunity to purchase them from you!

In working with several thousand clients over the years, I've noticed the majority of heart-based workshop leaders make one very dangerous mistake...

They Focus on the WRONG SKILLS… in the wrong order!
In fact, most Holistic Practitioners and Workshop Leaders believe that if they become the BEST in their chosen field of expertise… then word will eventually get out and their events will magically fill themselves.

So they keep getting more training and more certifications. They focus exclusively on enhancing their Mesmerize skill set.

Well, you can be the most polished, most Mesmerizing workshop leader in the world… You can be the most knowledgeable in your field…You can have HOT products, programs and services, full of real solutions for people... But none of it matters if you can't Magnetize people to you. You must focus on your MAGNETIZE skills first... it must be your TOP priority!

Simply put… it doesn't matter how great your events are if they're empty. The GREAT NEWS is… filling your events with ideal participants is a very learnable skill… I'm proof of that :)

I invite you to join me at my upcoming workshop entitled, "Fill Your Workshops... With Ease!" ... Where you'll learn the "3 Massive Mistakes Workshop Leaders Make that Keep Their Event Rooms Empty" and how you can MAGNETIZE your ideal clients to you!

The event takes place shortly and Tickets are ~~$15~~ FREE when you mention you came from COMMON GROUND. Call Kate at 1-888-686-7409

"Fill Your Workshops...with *EASE!*"

Avoid the 3 Massive Mistakes Workshop Leaders Make that Keep Their Event Rooms Empty!



Callan Rush

Join Callan Rush for this 3-Hour Workshop Where You'll Discover:

- How to Effectively use "Word of Mouth Marketing" to Fill Your Next Workshop.
- The 2 Most Cost-Effective Strategies to "Get the Word Out" to New Clients.
- A Proven, Easy to Follow, 3-STEP SYSTEM to Fill All Your Workshops...Now and Forever!

Tickets are ~~$15~~ **FREE** when you Pre-Register Now Call Kate at 1-888-686-7409

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